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Anecdotes / of / Lord Byron, / from / Authentic
Sources; / With / Remarks illustrative of his connection / with the
principal literary characters of / The present day. / *Dead scandals*
form good subjects for dissection. / Don Juan. / London, / Knight
and Lacey, Paternoster Row: / Aberdeen, W. Gordon; A. Steven-
son; D. Wylie; / And L. Smith. / 1825.

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ANECDOTES
OF
LORD BYRON.







W. Byron

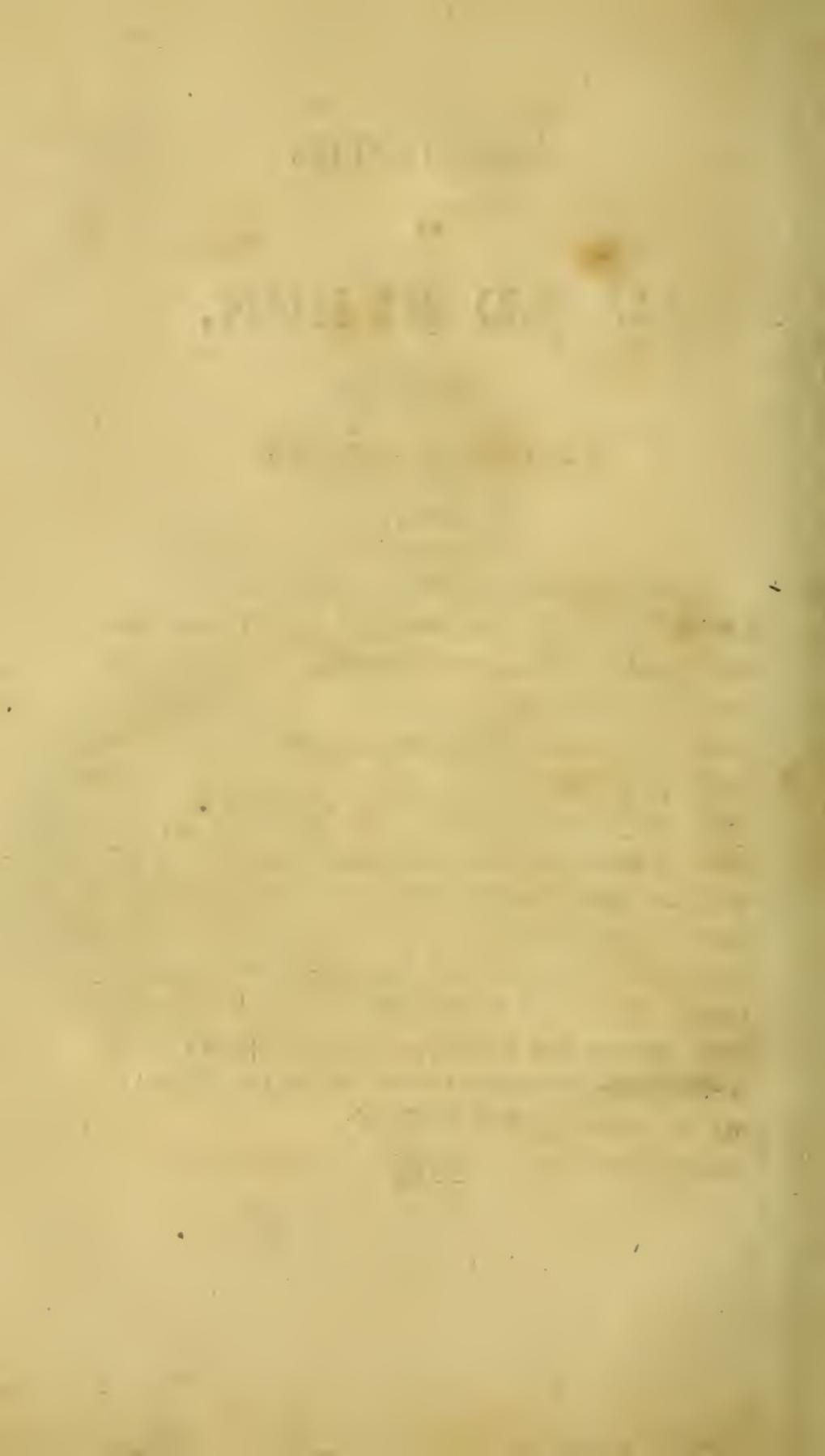
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1825.



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A

SHORT ACCOUNT
OF
LORD BYRON.

GENIUS has, all the world over, and more especially in England, generally been found emanating from individuals in humble life. The greatest authors, both in ancient and modern times, have braved the most adverse fortunes, and, in the midst of poverty and want in this frail life, struggled for, and obtained the approbation of ages. Lord Byron, who will now stand prominent in that armament of great men, who glide undiminished in their splendour and fame down the stream of immortality, was an exception to this rule. His biographer will not commence with, "Our poet was born of poor but honest parents," or even "of respectable parents, in the county of," &c.—the usual forms in writing the lives of three-fourths of literary men. Byron was high-

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born,—descended from a long race of warriors and nobles. The history of the family can be traced to the Conquest; for we find, during the reign of William the Conqueror, one Ralph de Buron, Burun, or Byron, who held Herestan Castle, in the Park of Herseley, and besides possessed many manors in the counties of Nottingham and Derby. In the reign of Henry II. we find the family name Biron or Byron, and thus it has remained ever since. At this time the family seat was in Lancashire, but in the reign of Henry VIII. when that “defender of the faith” reformed the church for the benefit of his own conscience and pocket, we find Sir John Byron, constable of Nottingham Castle, and master of Sherwood Forest, presented by his munificent Monarch, in whose favour he must have been far advanced, to the Church and Priory of Newstead, the adjacent manor of Poplewick, and the church patronage annexed to it. This Abbey was founded in the year 1170, by Henry II. as a Priory of Black Canons, and dedicated to the Virgin Mary. It continued in the family of the Byrons until the time of the late Lord, who sold it first to Mr Claughton for the sum of £140,000, and, on that gentleman’s not being able to fulfil the agreement, and thus paying £20,000 of a forfeit, it was afterwards sold to another person, and the greater part of the money vested in trustees for the join-

ture of the Hon. Mrs Byron.* The greater part of the edifice still remains. The present possessor, Major Wildman, is, with a genuine Gothic taste, repairing this beautiful specimen of architecture. The late Lord Byron repaired a considerable part of it, but, forgetting the roof, he had turned his attention to the inside, and the consequence was, that, in a few years, the rain paying a visit to the apartments, soon destroyed all those elegant devices which his Lordship had contrived. His Lordship's own study was a neat little apartment, decorated with some good classic busts, a select collection of books, an antique cross, a sword in a gilt case, and, at the end of the room, two finely polished skulls on a pair of light fancy stands. In the garden, likewise, was a great number of these skulls taken from the burial-ground of the Abbey, and piled up together; but afterwards they were re-committed to the earth. A writer who visited it soon after Lord Byron had sold it says, "In one corner of the servants' hall lay a stone coffin, in which were fencing gloves and foils; and on

* Medwin says, that it was the confusion of his affairs following his marriage that compelled Byron to part with Newstead. This shews that Captain Medwin was a very careless reporter; for Newstead was disposed of long before Byron had any intentions of marrying Miss Milbanke.

the walls of the ample but cheerless kitchen, was painted in large letters, “Waste not,—want not.” During the minority of Lord Byron, the Abbey was in the possession of Lord G——, his hounds, and divers colonies of jackdaws, swallows, and starlings. The internal traces of this Goth were swept away; but without, all appeared as rude and unreclaimed as he could have left it. With the exception of the dog’s tomb, a conspicuous and elegant object, I do not recollect the slightest trace of culture or improvement. The late Lord, a stern and desperate character, who is never mentioned by the neighbouring peasants without a significant shake of the head, might have returned and recognised every thing about him except perhaps an additional crop of weeds. There still slept that old pond, into which he is said to have hurled his lady in one of his fits of fury, whence she was rescued by the gardener, a courageous blade, who was the Lord’s master, and chastised him for his barbarity. There still, at the end of the garden, in a grove of oak, two towering Satyrs, he with his goat and club, and Mrs. Satyr with her chubby cloven-footed brat, placed on pedestals at the intersections of the narrow and gloomy pathways, struck for a moment, with their grim visages, and silent shaggy forms, the fear into your bosom which is felt by the neighbouring peasantry at “*th’ oud*

laird's devils." I have frequently asked the country people near Newstead, what sort of a man his Lordship was? The impression of his eccentric but energetic character was evident in the reply : " He's the devil of a fellow for comical fancies. He flogs the oul laird to nothing ; but he's a hearty good fellow for all that."

Walpole, who had visited Newstead, gives, in his usual bitter, sarcastic manner, the following account of it :

" As I returned I saw Newstead and Althorpe ; I like both. The former is the very Abbey. The great east window of the church remains, and connects with the house ; the hall entire, the refectory entire, the cloister untouched, with the ancient cistern of the convent, and their arms on it : it has a private chapel quite perfect. The Park, which is still charming, has not been so much unprofaned. The present Lord has lost large sums, and paid part in old oaks ; five thousand pounds of which have been cut near the house. In recompense, he has built two baby forts, to pay his country in castles for damage done to the navy, and planted a handful of Scotch firs, that look like ploughboys dressed in old family liveries for a public day. In the hall is a very good collection of pictures, all animals. The refectory, now the great drawing room, is full of Byrons : the vaulted roof remaining, but the windows have

new dresses making for them by a Venetian tailor." On this passage an Edinburgh reviewer has the following remarks—not so bad for one who had so lavishly abused Byron a few years before :—

" This is a careless but happy description of one of the noblest mansions in England ; and it will now be read with a far deeper interest than when it was written. Walpole saw the seat of the Byrons, old, majestic, and venerable ; but he saw nothing of that magic beauty which fame sheds over the habitations of genius, and which now mantles every turret of Newstead Abbey. He saw it when decay was doing its work on the cloister, the refectory, and the chapel, and all its honours seemed mouldering into oblivion. He could not know that a voice was soon to go forth from those antique cloisters that should be heard through all future ages, and cry, ' Sleep no more, to all the house.' Whatever may be its future fate, Newstead Abbey must henceforth be a memorable abode. Time may shed its wild flowers on the walls, and let the fox in upon the court-yard and the chambers. It may even pass into the hands of unlettered pride, or plebeian opulence, (who are there to abide with the fox and wild flowers ?)—but it has been the mansion of a mighty poet. Its name is associated to glories that cannot perish, and will

go down to posterity in one of the proudest pages of our annals."

This Sir John left the Abbey and his other possessions to his fourth son of the same name, on whom Queen Elizabeth conferred the honour of knighthood in 1579. His eldest son, Sir Nicholas, served with distinction in the Low Countries; and when the people thought fit to resist the tyranny of Charles, he was among the first to take up arms in the royal cause. Lord Clarendon, for this reason, speaks highly of his character, and of the exertions made by him in Cheshire for the assistance of the King. "He was," says the noble historian, "a person of great affability and dexterity, as well as martial knowledge, which gave great life to the designs of the well-affected; and, with the encouragement of some gentlemen of North Wales, he in a short time raised such a power of horse and foot, as made frequent skirmishes with the enemy, sometimes with notable advantage, never with signal loss."

Sir John Byron, the youngest brother of Sir Nicholas, was made Knight of the Bath at the coronation of King James II. He married Anne, eldest daughter of Sir Richard Molyneux, Bart., by whom he had eleven sons and one daughter. The eldest of his sons served with his uncle in the Low Countries; and on the removal of Sir Thomas Sandford, from the governorship of

the Tower, this Sir John Byron was appointed to that situation by his Majesty. He was, however, as obnoxious to the city and commons as his predecessor, and they determined to have him dismissed. The king refused, and the commons requested the peers to join them in another petition ; but they rejected the proposition, “as well for that the disposal of the custody of the Tower was the king’s peculiar right and prerogative, as likewise that his Majesty had committed the charge thereof to Sir John Byron, a person of very ancient family, an honourable extraction, and good fortune, and as unblemished a reputation as any gentleman in the kingdom.” The people, however, in three days, found more ways of gaining their wishes than by petitions, and Sir John Byron himself requested to be freed “from the agony and vexation of that place, which had exposed his person and reputation to the rage and fury of the people, and compelled him to submit to such repreaches as a generous spirit could not brook without much regret.” He was accordingly removed, and in the summer of 1642 was employed to escort the plate which the University of Oxford had contributed for their excellent sovereign. For his conduct on this occasion, the University conferred on him, with the best grace they could assume, the degree of Doctor in the Civil Law. Soon after he bore a distinguished part in

the battle of Edge Hill, as also in that of Marston, where three of his brothers were slain. This circumstance is thus commemorated by their poetical descendant :—

“ On Marston, with Rupert, 'gainst traitors contending,
Four brothers enriched with their blood the black field ;
For the rights of a Monarch, their country defending,
Till death their attachment to royalty sealed.”

For these services, this Sir John Byron was created by letters patent, dated at Oxford, October 27, 1643, a Peer, by the title of Baron Byron of Rochdale, in the county of Lancaster, with the remainder of the title to his brothers, and their male issue respectively. He was then appointed Field-Marshall-General of all his Majesty's forces in Worcestershire, Shropshire, Cheshire, and North Wales. He afterwards was appointed tutor to the Duke of York, and accompanied his pupil to Flanders under Turenne. He died at Paris in 1652, and, though twice married, left no issue. He was succeeded in his title and estates by his second brother, Sir Richard Byron, who was knighted by Charles I. for his conduct at Edge Hill. This second Lord Byron died in 1679, and was succeeded by his eldest son William, who married Elizabeth, daughter of John Viscount Chaworth in Ireland, by whom he had five sons, all of whom died

young, except William, fourth Lord Byron, who was born 1669. This Lord was three times married, and had by his third wife, five sons and one daughter. William, the eldest son, born in 1722, succeeded to the family honours in 1739. He entered into the naval service, and was lieutenant of the Victory, under Admiral Bluchen. In 1763, he was made master of the Staghounds, and, in 1765, he was sent to the Tower, and tried before the House of Peers for killing his relation and neighbour, Mr Chaworth, in the Star and Garter tavern in Pall Mall. He married first, Elizabeth, the daughter of Charles Shaw, Esq. of Best-thorp Hall, in the county of Norfolk, by whom he had three sons, all of whom died without issue before their father. He afterwards married one of the daughters of Commodore John Byron, his brother, and treated her, it is said, with great brutality—having on one occasion thrown her into the pond. He died at Newstead on the 17th May, 1798, without issue, and was succeeded by his grand-nephew, the late Lord Byron.

George Noel Gordon Byron was the son of Captain John Byron (eldest son of Commodore Byron) and of Miss Gordon of Gight, a descendant of an ancient and honourable family in Scotland. The place of his birth, like that of Homer, is not very well known. His first biographers said he was born

on his mother's estate in Aberdeenshire, on the 22d of January, 1788 ; afterwards this was denied, and he was said to have been born in London. Mr Dallas, who claimed a relationship, beginning his "Recollections" with, "Lord Byron was a nephew of Captain George Anson Byron of the Royal Navy, who married my sister Henrietta Charlotte," says he was born at Dover, and only baptized in London: Wherever he might have been born, or wherever he received baptism, it is well known he was taken, while an infant, by his mother to Aberdeen. His father had spent the fortune of his wife, and she was reduced to live on a very bare competence. Byron remained in Aberdeen for a little time, but, on account of his delicate health, and some appearance of consumption, was afterwards sent to Pannanieh, which is situated in one of the most wild and mountainous parts of Aberdeenshire ; and here, wandering about without any companion, unless chance should throw a shepherd's boy in his way, he imbibed that morbid love of loneliness which became so conspicuous in his writings and after life. Until seven years of age, he remained roving about among these mountains, dressed in the "garb of old Gaul," and receiving no other instructions than those his mother gave him. At that age, his mother, for the benefit of his education, returned with him to Aberdeen,

and he was placed at the grammar school there, where he remained until his succession to the title. He was by no means conspicuous as a scholar, but on occasions he could exert himself so as to shew that it was not for want of natural abilities that he was not the first in the class. His health was now restored. He was then removed, by the advice of his relation, the Earl of Carlisle, and placed at the celebrated school of Harrow. From this place he was entered of Trinity College, Cambridge, and continued there three years, but departed without taking a degree. Immediately on coming of age, he went to the Continent in company with his friend Mr Hobhouse. He returned to England in 1811, having been absent exactly two years. Soon after this his mother died.* On the second of January, 1815, he married the only daughter of Sir Ralph Noel Milbanke, and, a few weeks after their marriage, a separation took place, and he fled from England for ever. He died at Missolonghi in Greece, on the 19th of April, 1824, in the 37th year of his age.

* Captain Medwin makes Byron say his mother's death hurried him home from Turkey. This is incorrect.

ANECDOTES
OF
LORD BYRON.

IT is the custom of the grammar school at Aberdeen, that the boys of all the five classes to which it is composed, should be assembled for prayers in the public school at eight o'clock in the morning; after prayers a censor calls over the names of all, and those who are absent are punished.

The first time that Lord Byron had come to school after his accession to his title, the rector had caused his name to be inserted in the censor's book *Georgius Dominus de Byron* instead of *Georgius Byron Gordon*, as formerly. The boys unaccustomed to this aristocratic sound, set up a loud and involuntary shout, which had such an effect on his sensitive mind, that he burst into tears, and would have fled from the school had he not been restrained by the master.

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A school-fellow of Byron's had a very small Shetland pony, which his father had bought him, and one day they went to the banks of Don to bathe: but having only one pony, they were obliged to follow the good old practice called in Scotland "ride and tie." When they came to the bridge, over that dark, romantic stream, Byron bethought him of the prophecy which he has incorrectly quoted (from memory, it is true) in *Don Juan*:

"Brig o' Balgownie! wight is thy wa',
Wi' a wife's ae son an' a mare's ae foal,
Down shalt thou fa'."

He immediately stopped his companion, who was then riding, and asked him if he remembered the prophecy, saying, that as they were both only sons, and as the pony *might* be "a mare's ae foal," he would rather ride over first, because he had only a mother to lament him should the prophecy be fulfilled by the falling of the bridge, whereas the other had both a father and a mother to grieve for him.

While at the grammar school, in all the boyish sports and amusements he would be the first, if possible. Notwithstanding the weakness of his constitution and the mal-conformation of one of his feet, no boy could outstrip him in the race, or in swimming. His desire for supremacy in the school games, led him into many combats. In these he shewed himself no mean proficient at "England's darling science"—he came always off with honour, almost always victorious. Upon one occasion, a boy pur-

sued by another took refuge in his mother's house ; the latter, who had been much abused by the former, proceeded to take vengeance on him, even on the landing-place of the drawing-room stairs, when young Byron came out at the noise, and insisted that the refugee should not be struck in his house, or else he must fight for him. The pursuer, "nothing loath," accepted the challenge, and they fought for nearly an hour, when both were compelled to give in from absolute exhaustion.

An answer which Lord Byron made to a fellow-scholar, who questioned him as to the cause of the honorary addition of "*Dominus de Byron*" to his name, served at that time, when he was only ten years of age, to point out that he would be a man who would think, speak, and act for himself ; who, whatever might be his sayings or his doings, his vices or his virtues, would not condescend to take them at second hand. This happened on the very day after he had been menaced with being flogged round the school, for a fault which he had not committed ; and, when the question was put to him, he replied : "It is not *my doing*. Fortune was to whip me yesterday for what another did, and she has this day made me a Lord for what another has ceased to do. I need not thank her in either case ; for I have asked nothing at her hands."

A gentleman of the sister kingdom, one of those industrious persons who can engage to do any thing,

and who let nothing escape them for the want of seeking, heard that Lord Byron was about to set out for the continent, and upon receiving this intelligence it instantly flashed upon the mind of this universal undertaker, that it would be a good raising of the wind to procure the situation of private secretary to his Lordship. Upon this he made himself as spruce and as interesting as possible; and off he set for the Albany, where Lord Byron then lodged. His Lordship was at the door in the act of stepping into his curricle, when he was addressed by the candidate for the private secretaryship. He began by a long dissertation on his own powers; proceeded to an equally long topography of the route which it might be most eligible to pursue; and ended by an enquiry as to the time at which they would set out. "My dear Sir," said Byron, with much *naiveté*, "we set out this instant; but you see that I cannot accommodate you,—there are but two seats in the curricle, and my servant, the rogue, has got into one of them already."

Among the early amusements of Lord Byron, were swimming and managing a boat, in both of which he is said to have acquired a great dexterity even in his childhood. In his aquatic excursions near Newstead Abbey, he had seldom any other companion than a large Newfoundland dog, to try whose sagacity and fidelity, he would sometimes fall out of the boat, as if by accident, when the dog would seize him and drag him ashore. On losing this dog in the autumn of 1808, his Lordship caused

a monument to be erected, commemorative of its attachment, with an inscription, from which we extract the following lines :

“ Ye who, perchance, behold this simple urn,
Pass on—it honours none you wish to mourn !
To mark a friend’s remains these stones arise—
I never knew but one, and here he lies.”

On the death of his grand-uncle, and his consequent elevation to the Peerage, he was removed by his guardian to Harrow. Here he continued to display his love of boxing superior to that of Latin versification ; and instead of gaining high repute amongst the quiet plodding ones on account of devotion to his “ *Gradus ad Parnassum*, ” he made himself be feared and respected by the great skill he possessed in the use of his fists. Harrow is the nursery of politicians, and many celebrated personages of the day have exchanged blows with Byron at this school. One battle may be mentioned. Lord Calthorpe had wrote “ damned Atheist ” under Byron’s name. This his young Lordship considered an insult, and by inflicting on C—— some most “ apostolic blows and knocks,” he convinced him that he was not at least unacquainted with the tenets of the church militant.

The boys at Harrow had mutinied, and, in their wisdom, had resolved to set fire to the scene of all their ills and troubles—the school-room. Byron, however, was against the motion, and by pointing out to the young rebels the names of their fathers

on the walls,* he prevented the intended conflagration. This early specimen of his power over the passions of his school-fellows, his Lordship piqued himself not a little upon.

Byron long retained a friendship for several of his Harrow companions. Lord Clare was one of his constant correspondents. Scroope Davies was also one of his chief companions before his Lordship went to the continent. This gentleman and Byron once lost all their money at "Chicken hazard," in one of the hells of St James's, and next morning Davies sent for Byron's pistols to shoot himself with. Byron sent a note refusing to give them, on the ground, that they would be forfeited as a deodand. This comic excuse had the desired effect.

From Harrow Lord Byron was removed, and entered of Trinity College, Cambridge. Here, however, he did not mend his manners, nor hold the sages of antiquity in higher esteem than when under the command of old Drury at Harrow. He was above studying the Poetics, and held the rules of the Stagyrite in as little esteem as, in after life, he did the "invariable principles" of the Rev. Mr Bowles. Reading after the fashion of the studious men of Cam, was to him a bore ; and he held a se-

* "There, deeply carved, behold ! each tyro's name
Secures its owner's academic fame ;
Here, mingling, view the names of sire and son,
The one long 'graved, the other just begun."
Hours of Idleness.

nior wrangler in the greatest contempt. Persons of real genius are seldom candidates for college prizes, and Byron left "the silver cup" for those plodding characters, who, perhaps, deserve them, as the guerdon of the unceasing labour necessary to overcome the, all but invincible, natural dulness of their intellects. Byron, instead of reading what pleased tutors, read what pleased himself, and wrote what could not fail to displease those political weather-cocks. He did not admire their system of education, and *they*, as is the case with most scholars, could admire no other. He took to quizzing them, and no one likes to be laughed at. Doctors frowned, and Fellows fumed, and Byron, at the age of nineteen, left the university without a degree.

Whilst at Cambridge, he kept a young bear in his room for some time, and it is reported, that he told the master, he intended that his bear should sit for a fellowship. But however much the Fellows of Trinity may claim acquaintance with the "*Ursa Major*," they were by no means desirous of associating with his Lordship's *élève*.

His Lordship's bear has created a laugh at the expense of more persons than the pedants of Granata. When Mons. G—— was publishing a French edition of Byron's works, he was very anxious to procure some anecdotes of his Lordship, to be attached to his Poems by way of explanatory notes, in order to enhance the value of the work. Some wag told the Frenchman, that the stanzas to Thyrza

were meant for his Cambridge bear. Down accordingly this explanation went, and Madame the Bear now claims the celebrity due to the beautiful Countess Guiccioli.

Whilst living at Newstead, Byron once found a human skull of large dimensions, and particular whiteness. He concluded that it belonged to some "jolly old soul" of a friar who had been domesticated at Newstead, in the good lazy days of popery ; and saw no harm in turning the cranium of this second "Tuck" into a drinking goblet. It is very possible, (for such a skull must have been fed on something else than prayers and vegetables,) that this holy man in his day might have taken many a pull at the jovial flask ; and it was only changing sides—being pulled at, instead of pulling—not so bad to hold red wine as to "stop the bung-hole of a beer-barrel." Be this as it may, Byron sent the skull to London, where it was carefully and elegantly mounted. On its return to Newstead he instituted a new order at the old Abbey, and constituted himself Grand Master or Abbot of the Skull. Black gowns were procured for the members, (twelve in number,) the Grand Master's being somewhat distinguished from the rest, and at certain times a chapter was held. Upon these occasions, the skull being filled with claret, was handed about amongst the gods of the consistory, in imitation of the Goths of old, whilst many a grim joke was cut at the expense of this inspiring *caput mortuum*. The goblet is now in the possession of Colonel Windham. The following lines were inscribed upon it by Byron :

“ Start not—nor deem my spirit fled :
In me behold the only skull,
From which, unlike a living head,
Whatever flows is never dull.

I liv'd, I lov'd, I quaff'd like thee ;
I died ; let earth my bones resign :
Fill up—thou canst not injure me ;
The worm hath fouler lips than thine.

Better to hold the sparkling grape,
Than nurse the earthworm's slimy brood ;
And circle in the goblet's shape,
The drink of gods, than reptile's food.

Where once my wit, perchance, hath shone,
In aid of others let me shine ;
And when, alas ! our brains are gone,
What nobler substitute than wine !

Quaff while thou canst—another race,
When thou and thine like me are sped,
May rescue thee from earth's embrace,
And rhyme and revel with the dead.

Why not ? since through life's little day
Our heads such sad effects produce—
Redeem'd from worms and wasting clay,
This chance is theirs to be of use.”

Newstead Abbey, 1808.

Byron ascribes his turn for poetry to his living amidst the wild scenery of Lochnagar, the banks of the Dee in Aberdeenshire. It was amongst these “ rugged wilds and mountains hoar,” that he thinks he caught the poetic fire ; but if so, it lay dormant until blown into a flame by female charms. It is as impossible to be a poet without

a mistress, as to be a mechanic without tools. Byron whilst living at Newstead, during the vacation at Harrow, saw Miss Chaworth, who lived in the neighbourhood, and, of course, fell desperately in love. The public owe a great deal to her, for she was the object that first called forth the talent of the noble bard. She is the Mary of his poetry, and his beautiful "dream" is the history of their loves. Miss Chaworth was older than his Lordship by a few years, was light and volatile, and though no doubt highly pleased to be bepraised, and compared to every thing pretty in the celestial or terrestrial globe, yet she treated our poet and ardent lover as a younger brother. She was punctual to the assignations which took place at a gate dividing the grounds of the Byrons from the Chaworts, and accepted his letters from the confidante, but she did not correspond sufficiently in sighs and tears. As for his Lordship, he fancied himself a man, and became a real representative of a Minerva-press hero, wrote poetry, became sorrowful and serious, and spoke, and sighed, as all lovers do, "unutterable things." Miss Chaworth gave him her picture; and this to any young poet and lover, is a constant stimulant to the "*cacoethes scribendi.*"

The Byrons and Chaworts had long been on very ordinary terms of friendship. This arose from the following circumstance.

The grand-uncle of Lord Byron, and his immediate predecessor in the title, belonged to a

club of which Mr Chaworth was also a member. It met in the Star and Garter, Pall Mall, once a month, and was called the Nottinghamshire Club. On the 29th of January, 1765, they met at four o'clock to dinner as usual, and every thing went agreeably on, until about seven o'clock, when a dispute arose betwixt Lord Byron and Mr Chaworth, concerning the quantity of game on their estates. The dispute continued something high, and Mr Chaworth having paid his share of the bill, retired. Lord Byron followed him out of the room in which they had dined, and stopping him on the landing of the stairs, called to the waiter to shew them into an empty room. They were shewn into one, and a small tallow candle placed on the table. In a few minutes, the bell was rung, and Mr Chaworth found mortally wounded. He said that Lord Byron and he entered the room together, Lord Byron leading the way ; that his Lordship, in walking forward, said something relative to the former dispute, on which he proposed fastening the door ; that on turning himself round from this act, he perceived his Lordship with his sword half drawn, or nearly so, on which *knowing his man*, he instantly drew his own, and made a thrust at him, which he thought had wounded or killed him ; that then, perceiving his Lordship shorten his sword to return the thrust, he thought to have parried it with his left hand ; that he felt the sword enter his body, and go deep through his back ; that he struggled, and being the stronger man, disarmed his Lordship, and expressed a concern, as under an apprehension

of having mortally wounded him ; that Lord Byron replied by saying something to the like effect, adding at the same time, that he hoped “ he would now allow him to be as brave a man as any in the kingdom.”

Lord Byron surrendered himself to be tried by his Peers, on the 10th of April, 1765. Two hundred and fifty Peers, who sat in judgment on him, unanimously returned a verdict of manslaughter. Lord Byron then claimed the benefit of an old statute, and was acquitted on paying the fees. He lived a very disagreeable life afterwards, hated by, and at constant war with, his tenants. He latterly confined himself much to the Abbey, and fed crickets, which he rendered so tame, that they would crawl over his body, and used to whip them with a whip of straw when too familiar. On his death they quitted the house *en masse*.

It was something remarkable, that Lord Byron and Miss Chaworth should be both under the guardianship of Mr White. This gentleman particularly wished that his wards should be married together ; but Miss C., as young ladies generally do in such circumstances, differed from him, and was resolved to please herself in the choice of a husband. The celebrated Mr M—, commonly known by the name of Jack M—, was at this time quite the rage, and Miss C. was not subtle enough to conceal the *peuchant* she had for Jack ; and though Mr W. carried her from one watering-place to another, still the lover, like an evil spirit, followed ;

and at last, being somehow more persuasive than the “child of song,” he carried off the lady to the great grief of Lord Byron. The disappointed lover, however, neither hanged himself, nor “spak o’ jumpin’ owre a linn.” He betook himself to the bottle, and tried to drown his chagrin by bumpers of claret. The marriage, however, was not a happy one. The parties soon separated, and Mrs M. proposed an interview with her former lover, which, by the advice of his sister, he declined. His Lordship often alludes to his first love; and there is every reason to believe, had he married Miss C. the whole tenor of his life might have been different. Instead of following the muse, he might, in order to benefit his estate, have settled down with his lady into a sheep feeder and farmer, and occasionally spouted in Parliament on staple commodities and corn laws. This was possible, but by no means probable. Byron, we fear, would have been the same wayward, inconstant, dissatisfied being, whomsoever he had married.

Byron was a spoiled child, and the true offspring of one who had never been a disciple of Mentor: He says, “I was only six years of age when I lost my father. My mother, when she was in a rage with me, (and I gave her cause enough) used to say, ‘Ah! you little dog, you are a Byron all over, you are as bad as your father.’”

His father married, or ran away with, three women, spent three fortunes, and once wanted a guinea that he wrote for. He was a professed libertine, and braggadocio,—would lie with a man's wife, and then pull his nose, or shoot him if he hinted at the impropriety of such conduct. He was too, in one respect, the similar of Jack Falstaff; for he never smiled on a Dame Quickly, but when he was gulling her, in order to pick her pocket. He seduced the Marchioness of Carmarthen, and, after her divorce, married her, by the interference of her friends. She lived with him two years, brought him a daughter, and died of a broken heart occasioned by his conduct. He then eloped with Miss Gordon of Gight, spent her fortune at the gaming table, and soon after the birth of his son, abandoned her, and went to the continent, where he died.

Lord Eyron hated matrimony. He once took a bet of fifty guineas to one, with his friend Hay, that he would not marry. He sent him the money soon after his marriage with Miss Milbanke. The day before he made his proposals to this lady, he had no thoughts of marriage. He recollects the domestic bliss and fire-side scenes of his parents, and had, from thence, a perfect horror at matrimony.

Byron was first introduced to Miss Milbanke at Lady —'s. In going up stairs, he stumbled,

and remarked to Moore, who accompanied him, that it was a bad omen. On entering the room, he perceived a lady more simply dressed than the rest sitting on a sofa. He asked Moore if she was a humble companion to any of the ladies. The latter replied, "She is a great heiress, you'll better marry her, and repair the old place, Newstead."

Miss Milbanke declined Lord Byron's first offer, but on his return from the continent, she renewed their correspondence; and the tenor of her letter was, "that though she could not love him, she desired his friendship." "Friendship," says his Lordship, "is a dangerous word for young ladies; it is love full fledged, and waiting for a fine day to fly." It is said, Miss Milbanke declined his offer on account of the insufficiency of her fortune at that time. On hearing this some time after, his Lordship immediately renewed it, and was accepted.

During the marriage ceremony, Byron trembled like a leaf, made the wrong responses, and after it was over called her Miss Milbanke. Lady Noel wept during the time of it. Lady Byron was the only unconcerned person present.

After the ordeal, they set off in a carriage for the country-seat of Sir Ralph; and Byron was very sulky with the arrangement that had been made

on the occasion, for he found the lady's maid stuck between him and his wife. It was said, that Byron, on getting into the carriage, observed, he had married Miss Milbanke out of spite, because she had refused him twice;—but this he stoutly denies. “ If I had made so uncavalier, not to say brutal, a speech,” he says, “ I am convinced Lady Byron would have left the carriage to me and the maid (lady's, I mean). She had spirit enough to have done it, and would properly have resented the affront.”

Much has been said on Byron's immoral conduct. In his defence, however, it may be stated, that he was oftener the seduced than the seducer. He was not without his faults with respect to women, but it does not appear he was ever the cool calculating betrayer of unsuspecting female innocence. He affirms that he never seduced any woman. He gives the following instance of great forbearance. “ Mrs L. G. wrote and offered to let me have her daughter for £100. The old lady's P. S. was excellent. ‘ With *delicaci* every thing may be made *asy*.’ But the same post brought me a letter from the young one, deprecating my taking advantage of their necessities, and ending, with saying, that she prized her virtue. I respected it, and sent her some money.” This instance of his noble and upright spirit ought to palliate several of his faults.

In the eyes of some he may, perhaps, appear much

worse to have intrigued with a married woman, than even if he had accepted the offer of the young maiden. He carried on an intrigue with Mrs — for the space of eight months ; she was double his own age, and the mother of several children, who bore the name of her husband, and were brought up at his expense. Byron confesses to have been much fascinated with this “fat, fair, and forty” dame, and was at one time on the point of running away with her to the continent. Moralists perhaps will excuse him, when they know that *he* did not seduce this tender dame. She had been the *property* of many, and had discarded one noble friend for the sake of Lord Byron. When she tired of him, she became inconstant, and this, among such acquaintances, is a broad hint for the old possessor to give place to the new, and take himself off.

Another time, during the life of his mother, Byron dressed up Mrs — (another of his frail friends) and passed her off as his friend Gordon, in order that his mother might not know of his keeping in terms with such a female acquaintance. This pretended young gentleman miscarried in one of the hotels in Bond Street.

Whilst living at Venice, there was a baker’s wife took a particular fancy to Byron, and, as she was extremely good looking, he took a fancy to her ; and for some time this feeling was reciprocal. At first all went on comfortably ; but “beauty fades to the

eye and palls upon the sense," and Byron began to tire. Not so the lady ; she had got inside his house, and did not feel inclined to quit it ; or to suffer any other female to approach it. She used to watch the door, and if any female approached it, boldly and stoutly denied them admittance. She was passionately fond of his Lordship—was formed according to the Xantippe school, and no more suited the abode of a poet than a philosopher. Byron was no Socrates, and would not suffer her ; but it was with great difficulty that he got this termagant uncolonized. One day afterwards at dinner, she forced herself into his presence ; and seizing a knife threatened to kill herself. Byron knew this to be a feint, and took no notice of her. She then ran into the balcony, and threw herself into the canal. The water, however, reached to a little more than her knees, and a Gondola soon picked her out. This effectually cooled her passion, and she returned to her husband, who very kindly received his "cara sposa" to his longing arms. The circumstance caused some noise at the time, and some said his Lordship had thrown her into the canal ; others, that she had drowned herself for love. Harlowe was struck with her appearance, and took her portrait. Murray got it engraved, and dubbed her "Byron's Fornarina."

Byron, soon after he left Cambridge, published his "Hours of Idleness" at Newark. In his preface he states, that it was by the advice of his friends that he published them. He added dates to the

different poems, in order that it might be seen at what age they were written. At the time the "Hours of Idleness" made their appearance, the Edinburgh Review was in its zenith, and a volume of poetry by a young Peer not yet ascertained to be a whig or a liberal, afforded a good opportunity of exciting the risible muscles of the readers of the Review. A peer and poet were scarcely thought possible of being united in one person. Several noblemen, to be sure, wrote poetry, but then, it was only lauded before their face, by those who were eating and drinking at their expense. If sent into the world, people read it, made up their inequality in rank to the Peer, by laughing at his inequality of judgment. Lord Thurlow had translated Anacreon into English blank verse, so that the effusion of the Teian bard to his goblet, his mistress, and his lyre, looked more like those of a dapper little cockney, inspired by a pot of "Whitbread's best," and the eyes of his master's daughter, than one raised to ecstacy and madness by the juice of the vine. At this time, too, precocious talent was getting rather annoying. Sundry gentlemen in their teens were thinking themselves wiser than their grey-headed grandfathers, and not a few were making but one step from the nursery into the arena of literature, and poetry in particular. People were tiring of infant poets as they did of the infant Roscius; and were, besides, coming to the belief that making rhymes was not so very wonderful a thing as many supposed. The "Hours of Idleness," by a Lord and a minor, afforded an excellent opportunity for cutting at the poetical talents of lords in

general, and minors in particular. To it, accordingly, the reviewer went, and finished what *he*, no doubt, thought a very smart spuabashing article. But it is a failure ; and, though the matter to work upon was good, (for Byron's friends themselves allow that the " Hours of Idleness" are " versus inopes rerum, migæque canoræ"), the reviewer has made nothing but a very sorry article, filled with low cant, low wit, and vulgar Scotch proverbs. Rumour ascribed it to Mr Jeffrey, and Byron, at the time, believed he was the author. But Mr Jeffrey denied, and Byron afterwards concluded that it was written by a Mr S., Writer to the Signet, who entertained a grudge against him.

The effect produced upon his Lordship by this review was great, and shewed that he truly belonged to the "*genus irritabile vatum.*" He says, " When I first saw the review of my Hours of Idleness, I was furious, in such a rage as I have never been in since. I dined that day with Scroope Davies, and drank three bottles of claret, (pretty well for a youth of twenty,) but it only boiled the more."

The satellites at the shop of Messrs Constable & Company were vastly pleased with the article, and chuckling to one another, they were heard to say, " Well, we have done for this same George Gordon, Lord Byron, a minor. He wont tell us any more about his Hours of Idleness. We have given him work for twelve months at least in repenting of what he has done." They did give him work truly for a twelvemonth, but not in the manner supposed. Byron was not the character they had imagined. One who took it so much to heart was likely to fol-

low one of two plans,—either to cut his throat, or pay the reviewers in kind with interest. He chose the latter. The article acted *in vice cotis*, and in twelve months he produced the “ English Bards and Scotch Reviewers”—a satire which, in the opinion of many, ranks as high as any of his works. It made a great impression, and, in a short time, went through four large editions.

This work shews that satire is much easier than eulogy. He could not have wrote half the quantity in their praise, and expected to be read; his abuse therefore is almost indiscriminate. Something must be granted to Byron on account of his irritable state when he wrote this poem, otherwise not a little contempt would be due to him, for the manner in which he has treated men equal, if not superior, to him in mind. A great deal must also be granted to the young poet’s wish to show off his talent for satire, no matter at whose cost. He says, in an after work,

“ If I sneer sometimes,
It is because I cannot well do less,
And now and then it also suits my rhymes.”

He, however, seems to have become himself sensible of his error, for he did his utmost to suppress the work; and afterwards became the intimate friend of all mentioned in the Satire, with two or three exceptions.

Byron expected to be called out on account of his satire, but no one had courage to try his prowess

in the field, save Mr Moore, who did not relish the joke about “Little’s leadless pistols,” and sent a letter to his Lordship in the nature of a challenge, but which he, by his leaving the country, did not receive. On his return, Mr Moore made enquiry if he had received the epistle, and stated that, on account of certain changes in his circumstances, he wished to recal it, and become the friend of Byron through Rogers. The letter, addressed to the care of Mr Hanson, had been mislaid; search was made for it, and Byron, who did not like this offer of one hand with a pistol, and the other to shake in fellowship, felt very awkward. On the letter being recovered, however, he delivered it unopened to Mr Moore, and they afterwards continued most intimate friends.

Byron had only stated the truth about the “leadless pistols;” but truth itself is not always quite palatable when it must be followed by ridicule. Mr Jeffrey had in “good set phrase” abused the licentious poems of Thomas Little, Esq. *alias* Thomas Moore, Esq. and he, not choosing to put up with the flagellation of the modern Aristarchus, challenged him. When they arrived at Chalk Farm, the place fixed on for fighting the duel, the police were ready, and deprived them of their fire arms. On drawing their contents, the compound of “villanous salt-petre” was found, but the cold lead,

“The pious metal most in requisition
On such occasions,”

had somehow disappeared. The cause was this: One of the balls had fallen out in the carriage, and

the seconds, to make both equal, *drew the other*. The dénouement was most unlucky, but by no means tragic.

Byron was engaged in several duels. In one of these he was himself principal, and would have been so in the other if the challenge had been properly forwarded. It is singular that both these were from men who afterwards were his most intimate friends, Hobhouse and Moore.

Whatever may be said of Byron's genius, little can be granted to his consistency. He frequently changed his opinions of men and things, and, generally, rants the extremes. His temper was exceedingly irritable, and the aristocrat and liberal were very apt at times to come into collision to the annoyance of himself and others. His vanity was extreme, and his sensitiveness a bad companion for it. Trifles ruffled him, and it was only with great care that his friends could keep on terms with him. When he and Mr Hobhouse travelled together, the latter was under the necessity of keeping a stage or two ahead, in order that he might not come too much in contact.

“ He knew himself the most unfit
Of men to herd with man ; with whom he held
Little in common ; untaught to submit
His thoughts to others, though his soul was quell'd
In youth by his own thoughts ; still uncompell'd
He would not yield dominion of his mind
To spirits against whom his own rebell'd ;

Proud though in desolation ; which could find
A life within itself to breathe without mankind."

Byron several times changed his opinion with regard to his "Hours of Idleness." In the English Bards he confessed their little worth, and the same is held out in several other parts of his works. Before his death, however, like a kind parent, he seems to have taken some pity on this unoffending child of his youth, and has left on record that "there are some as good pieces in the Hours of Idleness as ever he wrote." It is a fortunate thing that the northern Zoilus did not perceive these beauties, for in that case his Lordship might have been spoiled by flattery. It is nonsense to say the harsh review injured Lord Byron. It did him a great deal of good—without it he might never have been a poet. Miss Chaworth and the Edinburgh Review were the provocatives of his Lordship's genius. The one made him a versifier by kindness and flattery ; the other roused his passions by roughness and abuse. In the hands of Miss C. he was pampered and led forward by stroking like a child's pony—the reviewer stoutly mounted his back, and spurred and goaded him on in the career of immortality. He wrote namby pamby verses to please Miss C. but he wrote Childe Harold to make a fool of the reviewer, by falsifying his prediction. It is a pity the author of that article is not perfectly known. He is one of those lucky wights who, having no means of celebrity on their own account, tack themselves by force to the tail of some great men, and are "damned to

everlasting fame." They are always the reverse of those they hang by; Byron and his reviewer, and Napoleon and his gaoler, are similarly placed. Great men occur but seldom, and they are happy dogs who are soundly buffeted by them; for whatever may be their present sufferings, they have immortality for their reward.

After Byron had published his "Hours of Idleness," he amused himself with writing amatory poetry for the study of the Blue-stockings. He imagined he was in love, and he thought he had been jilted, as most young tender-hearted gentlemen of his age do; the consequence was, that he sighed away in iam-bics at an awful rate.

" Dissatisfied, not knowing what he wanted ;
Nor glowing reverie, nor poet's lay,
Could yield his spirit that for which it panted,
A bosom whereon he his head might lay,
And hear the heart beat with the love it granted," &c.

His amatory poetry was much relished, being of that doleful lacrymose kind swallowed with such avidity by all literary old maids and sentimental young misses. This lugubrious nature of his strains gave occasion to the following joke: "The mortality among Byron's mistresses," said the late Lady A—ll, "is really alarming. I think he generally buries a first love every fortnight." "Madam," replied Curran, the Irish Barrister, "mistresses are not so mortal, as every one who has to deal with them unhappily knows. The fact is, my Lord weeps for the press, and wipes his eyes with the public."

This has the merit at any rate to resemble Curran.

His Lordship, it is said, merely entered the arena against Lords Nugent and Thurlow, who were at this time whining sadly, to the great admiration of their female, and great laughter of their male friends. Byron was a great Bondstreet lounger, a frequenter of lobbies, coffee-houses, and routs, a boxer and hard drinker—and found it no impolitic thing to be in favour with the “Blues.” The patronage of an antiquated noble Blue-stocking, is worth that of six Lords.

Byron soon began to detest the “Bas-blues.” Madame de Stael, who is the Queen of the Coterie, was in the practice of reading lectures to Byron (after his separation from his Lady) on the impropriety of his conduct, and of shewing him, like an orang outang, amongst her visitors. She once invited him to her house. On his entrance the company stared as if they had seen a wild beast, and one lady, it is said, actually fainted. Madame, in the presence of the whole body, gave him a pretty advice on the propriety of changing his conduct, to which his Lordship replied by a low bow. This lady also interfered between him and his wife, and tried to bring about a reconciliation.

Lady Byron was something of a “literary lady.” He describes her best himself. “She was easily made the dupe of the designing, for she thought

her knowledge of mankind infallible. She had got some foolish idea of Madame de Staél into her head, that a person may be better known in the first hour than in ten years. She had the habit of drawing people's characters after she had seen them once or twice. She wrote pages on pages about my character, but it was as unlike as possible. Lady Byron had good ideas, but could never express them; wrote poetry too, but it was only good by accident. Her letters were always enigmatical, often unintelligible. She was governed by what she called fixed rules, and principles squared mathematically. She would have made an excellent wrangler at Cambridge. It must be confessed, however, that she gave no proof of her boasted consistency. First she refused me, then she accepted me, then she separated from me—so much for her consistency.

Byron in his prose works, and perhaps in his conduct, shewed always the greatest disrespect for women. In his poetry he has done them every justice, but he declares, that his heroines are strictly the creatures of his imagination, merely a beau ideal likeness. He has endowed them with all those perfections which his fancy painted to him in Mary Chaworth, who, by the way, he says, was "any thing but an angel." "Women," he says, "are in an unnatural state of society. The Turks and Eastern nations manage these things better than we do. They lock them up, and they are much happier. Give a woman a looking-glass, and

a few sugar plums, and she will be satisfied." Of all his Lordship's opinions that have been promulgated, this is the worst. It is contemptible. From the mouth of a Turkish Bashaw, people would have only laughed at it ; but when they know Lord Byron held this opinion, what must be their pity for the mind which could paint all that was beautiful in its happy and poetic moments, and in the next, place those beings on a level with the brute creation? But it may be doubted if he ever said this. If he did, it must have been after dinner, as one quiz more on the word-eater who was swallowing with capacious maw every joke which Byron made to gull him. He says, "he formed this opinion not hastily, but from his own fatal experience ; he began by being jilted, and ended by being unwived." He, however, never was jilted, for the lady never loved him, and it was only his unweaning vanity that thought so ; and as to being unwived, the person who could entertain such opinions of women (for he must have formed them early if he drew from his own experience) was not likely to live happily, or to desire to live happily, or on common terms, with any woman.

Great men must have their prejudices, and many, of course, with respect to women. Napoleon had a contempt for women, because he never had a common sympathy, not to say love, for any human being, so much was he engrossed in self ; and Byron, agreeing with him in this sweeping opinion, had also his minor prejudices. He could never suf-

fer to see a woman eat. Of all the “ follies of the wise,” ever given to the world, this is, perhaps, the greatest. It is really no wonder that his female friends parted from him, considering that, dear to them as he might be, the most desperate can only live upon pure unmixed love for a day or two at farthest. The boldest Minerva-press heroine that ever braved danger for her lover, would sink into vapid indifference were her hero to put her on “ short commons.” Eating and drinking spoils the ground, and perhaps the beautiful ; but, nevertheless, men and women must masticate and swallow,

“ And not even Love can live on flowers.”

Byron never liked to be interrupted, (this seems not to have been the case when Medwin was at Pisa, for he often interrupted him, or rather never gave him time to write,) and Lady Byron did not attend to these whims. She had the impudence to eat at her husband’s table, and to appear too often in the presence of her loving lord—actions seemingly very venial in their nature.

Byron gives one instance of uncourteous speech towards her Ladyship. “ The only harsh thing I ever remember saying to her, was one evening shortly before our parting. I was standing before the fire ruminating upon the embarrassment of my affairs, and other annoyances, when Lady Byron came up to me and said, “ Byron, am I in your way ? ” To which I replied, “ Damnably.” I was

afterwards sorry, and reproached myself for the expression ; but it escaped me unconsciously—unvoluntary ; I hardly knew what I said." This is Captain Medwin's version of the story. The oath smells very much of the Captain of Dragoons. Others who knew as much of Byron as he did, and were his intimate friends, say, that the answer to the question, as reported to them at the time, was, " That you are indeed."

The cause of the separation of Lord and Lady Byron appears to have been this—want of money to keep up an establishment suiting to their rank. On the marriage Byron received £10,000 with his wife, and both entered on the expensive round of fashionable life. They gave dinners, and had separate carriages. Lady Byron's £10,000 soon melted away, and his Lordship's property was small, and he

" Was sole heir
To a Chancery suit."

Debts accumulated, and duns infested the house. At last an execution was levied, and the very beds on which the noble pair slept, were seized. This was by no means an agreeable state of affairs for Lady Byron, and she resolved to pay her father a visit until the storm blew over.

It never was Byron's opinion, that the separation was with the free-will of her Ladyship. On the way to her father's, he received a letter, commencing with the comical expression, " Dear

Duck," and in the common style of endearment. On her arrival at her father's, however, a very different letter was sent from Sir Ralph, beginning with, "Sir," and ending with saying, that his daughter should never see him (Byron) again. Byron, in his answer, denied Sir Ralph's having any control over Lady Byron; but a return of post brought a confirmation from her own hand. Fletcher's (his valet) wife, who was then maid to Lady B., says, that after the letter was written, and sent to the Post Office, her Ladyship sent to withdraw it, and was in hysterics of joy because it was not away. It appears, however, her relations had prevailed over her, and Byron received it.

Lady Noel appears to have always been Byron's enemy. She had not even the good manners to conceal it in her own house. Dining there one day, Byron had the misfortune to break a tooth, and was in an agony of suffering. "It will do you good," remarked Lady Noel. "I am glad of it." "I gave her a look," says his Lordship.

Sir Ralph was a good sort of country gentleman, and always had a leg of mutton served at his table, in order that he might cut the same joke upon it. He, too, seems to have been drawn into enmity against Byron, by the representations of Lady Noel and Mrs Charlment.

Mrs Charlment seems to have been the agent between the mother and the daughter, and the spy

upon Lord Byron. She was in the practice of watching Byron's visits, and, it is said, once broke open his desk, and discovered a book which did little honour to his Lordship's taste in literature ; and also some letters betwixt him and a married lady, with whom he had intrigued before his marriage. Lady Byron sent the letters to the injured spouse, but he very wisely preferred bearing his antlers quietly, to exposing himself to the aim of his Lordship's pistols.

The separation afforded fine scope for the tittle tattle of parties, and the surmises of the newspapers. One of the principal stories of the day was, that Mrs Mardyn, the actress, had called on his Lordship at his own house, and remaining some time with him in the library, a shower of rain came on, and his Lordship ordered his carriage to be prepared for Mrs Mardyn, but this was prevented by Lady Byron. Mrs Mardyn was then said to have been introduced to the dinner table, and Lady Byron left the house in the carriage intended for the actress. This capital story has been traced to an Irish paper, and has as much truth in it as one half the stories about his Lordship. The Irishman wanted a theory for an important, but inexplicable occurrence, in fashionable life, and thus formed not an unpleasurable one. The belief of it was very strong at the time, and Mrs Mardyn was driven, by the insults of the audience, from the stage. - Byron himself was hooted at, and hissed as he went to the theatre, or the House of Lords, or appeared on the

streets. The Journals of the day, except the *Examiner*, took part with Lady Byron; and although his Lordship declared that he was "more sinned against than sinning," they compared him occasionally to different worthies ancient and modern (such as Nero, Apicius, Epicurus, Caligula, Heliogabulus, Henry the Eighth, and the —), and attacked him with the greatest virulence. His wife was an injured Lady—the concentration of all the virtues and perfection of the sex. His friends all rose against him, and Lady Jersey was the only person in the fashionable world that did not consider him as a common enemy. Byron himself has declared, that he never in his life spoke to Mrs Mardyn, and the whole is an unfounded calumny.

Byron has accused his wife's friends of an attempt to procure a certificate of lunacy against him. "I had been," writes Captain Medwin for his Lordship, "shut up in a dark street in London, writing the Siege of Corinth, and had refused myself to every one until it was finished. I was surprised one day by a doctor and a lawyer almost forcing themselves at the same time into my room. I did not know till afterwards the real object of their visit. I thought their questions singular, frivolous, and somewhat importunate, if not impertinent; but what should I have thought if I had known that they were sent to provide proofs of my insanity? I have no doubt that my answers to these emissaries' interrogatories were not very rational or consistent, for my memory was heated with other

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things. But Dr Baillie could not conscientiously make me out a certificate for Bedlam ; and perhaps the lawyer gave a more favourable report to his employers." This is Captain Medwin's version of an old story. The fact is, Byron was at the time unwell, and Dr Baillie, thinking from the description of his symptoms by his wife and others, that he was labouring under water in the brain, was introduced to his patient, and, on personal examination, had reason to alter his opinion.*

To a question, whether he thought Lady Byron ever was in love with him, he replied, " I have answered that question already. No ! I was the fashion when she first came out : I had the character of being a great rake, and was a great dandy—both of which young ladies like. She married me from vanity, and the hope of reforming and fixing me. She was a spoiled child, and naturally of a

* " For Inez call'd some druggists and physicians,

And tried to prove her loving lord was *mud* ;

But as he had some lucid intermissions,

She next decided he was only *bad* ;

Yet when they ask'd her for her depositions,

No sort of explanation could be had,

Save that her duty both to man and God

Requir'd this conduct,—which seem'd very odd.

" She kept a journal, where his faults were noted,

And open'd certain trunks of books and letters,

All which might if occasion serv'd be quoted ;

And then she had all Seville for abettors,

Besides her good old grandmother."

jealous disposition, and this was increased by the infernal machinations of those in her confidence."

It is difficult to account for some of those opinions of Lord Byron with regard to his Lady, as quoted by Capt. Medwin when some other parts of his writings are taken into consideration. His "Farewell" would, to say the least, mark a man who loved, and parted, from serious and insurmountable causes, almost heart-broken from the object of his affections. These remarks, again, to Medwin, display an utter disregard, and almost contempt, for his wife and the mother of his child. Byron was made up of contradictions, and it is impossible to affirm that he was not serious at both times. If so, they afford one example more to show how deeply he knew and felt; for Byron never was a hypocrite, and always felt at the time as he wrote,—the finer affections of our nature;—and how readily his own restless spirit, which delighted more to dwell on the dark side of human nature, than, like that of most other poets, riot in fanciful and pleasing views of man's perfections, could master these finer feelings, and turn them into ridicule and contempt.

The destruction of his auto-biography is to be regretted for many reasons—but none more so than for the occasion the circumstance of its destruction has given to the promulgation of unauthenticated details, and slanders concerning those who were most nearly connected to his Lordship. Memoirs

written by himself would have at once settled every dispute, but there will a doubt hang on all other publications. The public confidence in Medwin has been already shaken by the satisfactory contradiction Mr Murray has been able to give, by means of letters of a recent date from Byron, to the calumnies that have been thrown by the "Conversations" on his character and dealings.

Byron, while on the Drury Lane Committee, was talking one evening behind the scenes to the *corps dramatique* of the misconduct of a female at the rival house; and was pleased to say to Terry, "had I been Harris, I would have turned her out of the house." "And had I been the lady," replied Miss T. Kelly, "I would have put on breeches and challenged your Lordship."—"In that case," retorted Byron, "I might have considered whether it would be worth my while to turn *sans-culotte*, and accept the challenge."

The Honourable Mr Skeffington had written a Tragedy, called the "Mysterious Bride," which was fairly damned on the first night. A masquerade took place soon after this fatal catastrophe, to which went John Cam Hobhouse as a Spanish nun who had been ravished by the French army, under the protection of his Lordship. The Hon. Mr Skeffington compassionating the unfortunate young woman, asked, in a very sentimental manner, at Byron, "Who is she?" "The Mysterious Bride,"

replied his Lordship. This was a rap on the teeth to the unfortunate author.

Byron could never bear admonition, and he lost many of his dearest friends by the ill-nature with which he treated them on their offering any advice. His affair with Lady ***** “double his own age, and the mother of several children,” lost him a sincere friend. The gentleman alluded to, in speaking with him of a certain reputation which was damaged about that time, said, “By the bye, my Lord, it is reported you have become a contributor to the Harleian Miscellany.” The result was a sullen answer, which ended in estrangement, and ultimately broke up their intercourse.

The same thing is said to have nearly happened to one of his earliest friends who had undertaken to tell him of the slanders which were circulating about him at the time of the separation. The place chosen for the communication proves the address supposed to be requisite. It was under the gallery in the House of Commons, during an important debate, which rendered it necessary to talk in whispers, and in an indifferent manner, to avoid observation.

The enmity Byron entertained towards the Earl of Carlisle was not altogether owing to the Earl’s opinion of the “Hours of Idleness.” He had to be

sure spoken rather irreverently of that production, when Byron expected, as a relation, that he would have countenanced it; and this was enough, in the eyes of any young poet, to mark him down as a drivelling old fool. Byron, however, had another reason for being displeased with his grand uncle: On coming of age he had written to the Earl of Carlisle, wishing him to introduce him to the House of Lords. Just at that time he was engaged in writing his Satire of English Bards and Scotch Reviewers, and generously (for a poet) forgetting the unnatural display of the "ungentle craft," in his noble relative, he introduced into his manuscript these lines,

"On one alone Apollo deigns to smile,
And crowns a new Roscommon in Carlisle."

The noble subject of this adulation, however, unfortunately declined to introduce Byron to Parliament:—There was then substituted in the copy the following heartless sarcasm on his relation's age:

"No more will cheer with renovating smile
The paralytic puling of Carlisle."

The noble Earl, it is said, even somewhat doubted his right to a seat in that honourable House; and, though laughing at the "Hours of Idleness," was touching a tender point, questioning of his descent was a sting to the very quick. His remarks on Carlisle are perhaps the severest in his satire; and they were written in the bitterest spirit of enmity.

The Earl of Carlisle is a very good sort of an

old gentleman,—charitable and loyal : He has, however, been rather blind in his own case as to

*‘Quid ferre recusent
Quid valeant humeri,’*

and committed a mistake by loading *himself* (or his *own* library, as Byron remarks—for *there* the works of the noble author appear, in all the dignity of gilt and morocco, sufficiently conspicuous—) with too much poetry. He is, however, pleased with himself, and perhaps many others have written worse verses than even the Earl of Carlisle. He is a great admirer of the classic drama, and once strenuously argued for the propriety and necessity of small theatres, in a pamphlet which he published for a sixpence, in order that the vulgar might buy, and be convinced of the expediency of being excluded from the shilling galleries.—On the same day that this weighty publication came out, he subscribed £1000 for something or other—and, on this occasion, the following Epigram was composed :

“ Carlisle subscribes a thousand pound
Out of his rich domains ;
And for a sixpence circles round
The produce of his brains.
'Tis thus the difference you may hit
Between his fortune and his wit.”

Byron retained his antipathy to his relative to the last. On reading some lines in the newspapers addressed to Lady Holland by this self-constituted representative of the nine, persuading her to reject

the box bequeathed to her by Napoleon,—beginning,

“Lady, reject the gift,” &c.

he immediately wrote the following parody :

“Lady, accept the gift a hero wore,
In spite of all this elegiac stuff:
Let not seven stanzas written by a bore
Prevent your Ladyship from taking snuff.”

When Byron found that he was not to be introduced to the House by the Earl, he resolved to introduce himself. He accordingly went to it a little before the usual hour, when he knew few of the Lords would be present. When he entered, he was something abashed, and looked very pale; but passing the woolsack where the Chancellor was busied at some of the ordinary routine of the House, he went directly to the table, where the oaths were administered to him in the usual manner. The Lord Chancellor then approached, and offered his hand in the most open familiar manner, congratulating him on his taking possession of his seat. Lord Byron only placed the tips of his fingers in the Chancellor's hand, and looked something sullen and displeased. The Chancellor returned to his seat, and Byron, after lounging a few minutes on one of the opposition benches, retired. To Mr Dallas, (his friend), who followed him out, he gave as a reason for not entering into the spirit of the Chancellor,—“that it might have been supposed he would join the court party, whereas he intended to have nothing at all to do with politics.”

He only addressed the House twice. The first of these speeches was on the Catholic question, and gave good hopes of his becoming an orator. The other was on some Manchester affair, and was a Don Juan sort of a speech. Byron himself says, the Lords told him, “his manner was not dignified enough for them, and would better suit the lower House.” Others say, they gathered round him while speaking, listening with the greatest attention ;— a sign at any rate that he was interesting. He always voted with the opposition, but was not one to be depended on. His ideas of politics were then rather unsettled, and he had not sworn to the creed of whiggery. He hated and abused Castlereagh when living, and his memory when dead ; and scarcely found words to express his contempt for that sworn enemy of his country.

Byron denies the accusation of ingratitude towards his Majesty, which has been laid to his charge. He affirms, that the introduction was unexpected, and the desire of it was not on his side. He met him one evening at Colonel J——’s, when, being observed, General — was sent by that Personage to request Byron to be introduced to him. The request was in the nature of a command, and, of course, the introduction took place. This is equivalent to his Lordship’s statement of the matter. Others, however, say, that his reception was exceeding kind, and the Regent observed, “that he had thought there was only one good poet in Bri-

tain (Kings are not infallible in criticism), and that one Walter Scott, until he read Childe Harold."—A few days after Byron intended to go to the levee, and was arrayed in all the panoply of powder and perfume for the occasion, when he received word that the ceremony was deferred. He never dressed for it again; but, at the time of his introduction, his leaning was great toward the court party, and he would, without a doubt, have become a hanger-on for some time by a little flattery. But here he would have soon met other men higher in favour than himself, and then he would have deserted. He could never rest where he did not play first fiddle.

Byron has been sometimes accused of parsimony and love of gain; but there are instances of the contrary more than sufficient to confute fully that charge.

A young lady of considerable talents, but who had never been able to succeed in turning them to any profitable account, was reduced to great hardships through the misfortunes of her family. The only persons from whom she could have hoped for relief were abroad; and so, urged on, more by the sufferings of those she held dear than by her own, she summoned up resolution to wait on Lord Byron, at his apartments in the Albany, and ask his subscription to a volume of poems. She had no previous knowledge of him, but from his works; those works which have induced so many others, equally ignorant, to proclaim him a misanthrope and a monster;

but from the boldness and feeling expressed in these, she concluded that he must be a man of kind heart and amiable disposition, (rather an odd conclusion.) Experience did not disappoint her, and though she entered the apartment with faltering steps, and a palpitating heart, she soon found courage to state her request, which she did in the most simple and delicate manner, (&c.) He heard it with the most marked attention, and the keenest sympathy ; and when she had completed, he, as if to avert her thoughts from a subject which could not be but painful to her, began to converse in words so fascinating, and tones so gentle, that she had hardly perceived he had been writing, until he put a folded slip of paper into her hand, saying, that that was his subscription, and that he most heartily wished her success,—“but,” added he, “we are both young, and the world is very censorious ; and so, if I were to take any active part in the promoting of your subscription, I fear it would do you harm rather than good.” The young lady, overpowered by the prudence and delicacy of his conduct, took her leave ; and, upon opening in the street the paper, which in her agitation she had not previously looked at, she found it was a draft upon his Banker for fifty pounds !

Another instance, which happened about the same time, is, though it did not require the same delicacy, equally characteristic. A young man from a distant part of the country, who had quarrelled with his father, in consequence of having squan-

dered a small sum of money, was friendless, and almost penniless in the metropolis ; and at last wrote a little poem, or rather a succession of bad rhymes, which he offered to the Booksellers. Most of them rejected the proffered poem with scorn ; but at last the writer met with one who said, that, if ten pounds were given him, he would publish it, and give the writer half the profits. Elated with this, he sallied into the streets, and had wandered as far as Piccadilly ere he knew what he was about, or where he was going. Exhausted at last, he stood still at the front entrance of the Albany, with his manuscript in his hand. Byron happened to pass ; and his notice being drawn by something peculiar in the young man's appearance, he accosted him. The whole story came out ; and the rustic rhymster was taken into the apartment of the bard. "And so you say you have quarrelled with your father ?" said Byron. "Yes," replied the young man, holding down his head. "And you could get a chance of half the profits of your poem for ten pounds?" "Yes," said the young man again raising himself up. "And for how much could you be reconciled to your father?" said Byron again. "For ten pounds also," was the reply. "Then," said Byron, "there are ten pounds—give it to your father, and let him publish it if he pleases : and there are other five for yourself, to hasten you on your way." The young man was astonished ; and before he could turn round to thank his benefactor, that benefactor had vanished. "Prodigious!"

The above traits of his Lordship are given, because they are bandied about ; but it may be re-

marked, that, whether true or not, they smack horribly of the "gentlemen of the press." The first, even if true, is immoderately stuffed with "fudge," and the second almost carries absurdity on the face of it. It is all nonsense about his Lordship being struck with "something peculiar in a young man's appearance." Few people now-a-days are struck with the appearance of any persons on the street, unless they be of that order which George Cruickshank is so ready to transpose to his portfolio, when they excite any thing but our sympathy and compassion. One may trudge from White-chapel to Whitehall, and back again, and make as many turns up and down streets in his way as he will, with even a folio manuscript on his back, without any person taking the least notice of him—unless he pleases to jostle them, when, instead of fifteen pounds, he may receive a kick, and a "d—— me, Sir, what do you mean?"

Another instance of his Lordship's liberality was the sending £50 to — ; who made his expulsion from the possessions of the East India Company serve as an excuse for taxing the purses of the whigs and liberal party.

Perhaps, however, the most marked, as well as the most authenticated, instance of his Lordship's generosity, was the gratuitously presenting the copy-right of his first Canto of Childe Harold to his friend Mr Dallas, the brother of Judge

Dallas. It was a delicate manner of assisting a poor but honourable friend. Mr Murray gave £600 for the first edition of it.

Whilst at Venice, Byron displayed a most noble instance of generosity. The house of a shoemaker, near his Lordship's residence in St Samuel, was burned to the ground, with every article it contained, and the proprietor reduced, with a large family, to the greatest indigence and want. When Lord Byron ascertained the afflicting circumstances of that calamity, he not only ordered a new and superior habitation to be immediately built for the sufferer, the whole expense of which was borne by his Lordship, but also presented the unfortunate tradesman with a sum equal in value to the whole of his lost stock in trade and furniture.

Neither was ingratitude a "besetting sin" of his Lordship. At the time of his separation from Lady Byron, when all the journals were ransacking the histories of ancient and modern times for names sufficiently odious, with which to compare him, Leigh Hunt, enjoying the freshness and silent comfort of his fine rural seat on the Hamstead road, alone took the side of his Lordship, and not only threw himself recklessly into the contest against his contemporaries, but also, on Byron's departure for the continent, wrote some very pretty unintelligible verses to his Lordship,—quoting Pulci,—invoking him "dear Byron,"—and talking "a

pretty considerable deal" about Phœbus, Graces, Orpheus, &c. all of whom he no doubt knew by report.

Leigh's defence was certainly manly at the time ; and galled, as his Lordship was, by the undeserved abuse and slanders that were at that time thrown upon his character, it made a great impression upon him ; and he constantly after that " took in the Examiner." When Byron and John Murray split, the former immediately transferred his manuscripts to the Hunts for publication, notwithstanding the remonstrances of many of his friends, and the injury which he saw must inevitably follow to himself by the connection. The shop in Tavistock street, Strand, was the antipodes to that of Albemarle Street ; and second rate actors, and third rate artists, are a very different class of loungers, and peripatetic puffers, from literary naval captains, " far-travelled" fellows, and classical embued high-church-men ; and a " notice" in the Examiner is scarcely so persuasive as a learned looking " article" in the Quarterly. Whilst Byron was the friend of Murray, the evil mouths of the party, who were obliged to hate him for his political principles, were shut ; but the publishing of one of Byron's works by the Hunts, was the signal for the blood-hounds to shake themselves clear, and pursue, with the utmost speed, their victim. Leigh and John Hunt are not men apt to conciliate the opposite party ; they have the merit of being steady to their principles : and Byron, when he once pledged himself, would have sunk with them before he would have deserted the cause.

Leigh Hunt went to Pisa while Byron resided there, and together they commenced a periodical under the title of "The Liberal." The idea of a periodical was suggested by Mr Hunt; and Byron, in the hope that it would be of some benefit to his friend, agreed to furnish some articles. It was continued for a few months, but, with the exception of a few articles furnished by Lord Byron, was so insufferably dull, that the public threw it up in utter hopelessness. The partiality of Leigh Hunt to Byron arose principally from the latter's visiting him whilst confined in King's Bench. Leigh, in his poem, thus writes :

" And so adieu, dear Byron, dear to me
For many a cause disinterestedly ;
First for unconscious sympathy, when boys,
In friendship, and the Muses trying joys ;
Next for that frank surprise, when Moore and you
Came to my cage like warblers kind and true,
And told me with your cordial arts of lying
How well I look'd when you both thought me dying."

These are causes of partiality belonging exclusively to Mr Hunt. The following,

" Next for a rank worn simply, and the scorn
For those who trifle with an age free born,"

was a cause of partiality common in many others to Lord Byron, as well as in the Hamstead poet. Mr Hunt is a very good and honourable man, and stanch in what he considers the right path in politics. The only unfortunate things that have happened to him are, the being educated in the Blue-Coat School—the invincible desire of constantly

talking “ of things not seen, but heard of,” by him, viz. trees, streams, and such like ruralities—the love, common to all cockney poets, of revelling in Grecian mythology,—and worst of all, the being constituted and crowned “ King of the Bards of Cockaigne” by Blackwood’s Magazine.

Another instance of his Lordship’s humanity may be given. During the massacre of the Greeks at Scio, a Greek boy, about eight years old, whose parents and kindred were savagely butchered, crept instinctively into an oven of his paternal home, to escape the general slaughter. He remained there two days without any nutriment whatever, when, at the expiration of the second day, he was providentially discovered senseless and exhausted. Lord Byron, on being fully informed of these singular facts, immediately received the orphan boy under his protection. The extraordinary history of his preservation, and the sad havoc of his race, endeared the child more closely to his sympathy and affection. He was constantly with his Lordship to the last moment of his existence. It was for this boy that his Lordship expressed such concern, when his vessel was nearly captured by a Turkish frigate. He writes thus at the time :—“ I am uneasy at being here, (in a small unprotected port close to the Turkish frigate), not so much on my own account as on that of the Greek boy with me—for you know what his fate would be,—and I would sooner cut him in pieces myself, than have him taken by these barbarians.” It may be men-

tioned that this boy, after his Lordship's death, was sent to England by the Honourable Leicester Stanhope, for the advancement of his education, and recommended by him to the protection of the Earl of Harrington. On his arrival in this country, the Duke and Duchess of Leinster were so delighted with the nobleness of his manner, that they adopted him as their protégé. He is resident in London with the Leinster family. He is a perfect Grecian warrior in miniature ; his costume is most imposing. He wears a turban, jeliiek, &c. and on the right side of his belt are lodged a pair of pistols, on his left a dagger. He was in the first coach after the hearse of his illustrious patron, whose name, even when casually mentioned in his presence, produces the most afflicting recollections on his youthful mind.

It is singular that men of the first genius and talents are often the creatures of a superstition which they would demonstrate as being wrong, but yet cannot free themselves from the power of. Though we may be astonished that the masculine mind of Johnson was a slave in this respect, we cannot greatly wonder that Byron was the creature of superstition, (for such in truth was the case). Living in a wild, desolate, and mountainous part of the country, where the tale of supernatural agency is the amusement of the old and the young ; and at an age when such matter is most eagerly craved by the mind and deeply engraved on its tablets, it is no wonder that he should

have retained a great portion of this superstitious belief. Besides, Byron was a weakly boy, and unable, *at that time*, both by the state of his constitution, and the impediment in his walking, from entering into the more active sports of boys of the same age; he was therefore left more to the workings of his own mind, and the feeding, of course, of the superstitious temperament; for solitude breeds and nurtures superstition. In the family history, likewise, there were many circumstances to give it the air of romance, and thus almost to force on the mind of its representative that, as the hero, there was something more than common in his fate. He was not, as appears, a stanch believer in ghosts and unearthly visitors, but he was a believer in omens and presentiments. One has been given—his stumbling on the stairs when he went first to see Miss Milbanke. A second was this: The very day on which his match was concluded with that Lady, a ring was dug up by the gardener, at Newstead, which had belonged to his Lordship's mother. Her marriage was very far from being a happy one, and this ring her son accordingly considered, thus curiously discovered, sent as a token of the misery which was to attend his own.

Another instance of his Lordship's evil presentiments is mentioned by Captain Medwin, as occurring while he was at Pisa. On the birth-day of his daughter, Byron was very melancholy, and declined their usual amusement of pistol firing: They went out to their ride, and Byron tried to

rally his spirits, but in vain. Whilst they were on the road, they heard a loud lamentation ; and on riding up to the cottage from whence it proceeded, they found that it was a widow wailing her only child, who had died at that instant. Byron became much affected at the circumstance. “ I shall be unhappy,” said he, “ till I hear that my daughter is well.” I have a great horror of anniversaries ; people only laugh who have never kept a register of them. I always write to my sister on Ada’s birth-day. I did so last year ; and what was very remarkable, my letter reached her on my wedding-day, and her answer reached me at Ravenna on my birth-day ! Several extraordinary things have happened to me on my birth-day ; so they did to Napoleon ; and a more wonderful circumstance still occurred to Marie Antoniette.”

On the day after this occurrence, the Courier brought a letter from England, in which the death of his old physician Polidori was stated. “ I was convinced,” he remarked, “ something very unpleasant hung over me last night.” I expected to hear that somebody I knew was dead ; so it turns out—who can help being superstitious ? Scott believes in second sight, Rousseau tried whether he would be damned or not by aiming at a tree with a stone, Goethe trusted to the chance of a knife’s striking the water whether he was to succeed in some undertaking. He might also have mentioned Swift’s placing the success of his life on the drawing a trout he had hooked out of the water.

At a Christmas-day dinner, he once ordered a plum pudding, à l'Anglaise. Somebody afterwards told him that it was not good. "Not good!" said he, "why it ought to be good, it cost fifteen Pauls."

He could live most abstemiously, and generally did so. He offered once to bet Hay that he would live on £60 a-year. When he entertained company, every luxury that could be procured was produced, and he would indulge to a great degree in wine.

To his own select company, Byron could do the honours of his house with the greatest kindness and hospitality; but he was always very much averse to this way of eating into men's favour, and was in this respect the very opposite of his friend Rogers.

Mr Rogers is as much celebrated for his good dinners as his good poetry; and no critic says a word against the father of what has been called the "Leg of Mutton School of Poetry," because no critic sits down to review the landlord's book, without having the table in the mind's eye.

Byron was often miserly in trifles; and when the whim struck him, almost foolishly profuse. No person can say a word about penuriousness, when they recollect the sums he lavished on Greece, and his intentions of devoting his fortune, and even his

life, in that good cause. A part of a letter may here be given, which will shew, not only the humorous style of his correspondence, but also his devotion to the cause of the Greeks. “ I have written (he says in this letter, dated 13th Oct. 1823), to our friend Douglas Kinnaird, on our own matters, desiring him to send me out all the farther credits he can command (and I have one year’s income, and the sale of a manor besides, he tells me, before me) ; for till the Greeks get their loan, it is probable I shall have to stand partly paymaster, as far as I am “ good upon ‘Change,” that is to say. I pray you to repeat as much to *him*, and say, that I must in the interim draw on Messrs R. most formidable—to say the truth, I do not grudge it, now the fellows have begun to fight again ; and still more welcome shall they be, if they will go on—but they have had, or are to have, four thousand pounds (besides some private extraordinaries for widows, orphans, refugees, and rascals of all descriptions) of mine at one ‘swoop,’ and it is expected that the next will be as much more, and how can I refuse if they will fight ? and especially if I should happen to be in their company ? I therefore request and require, that you should apprise my trusty and trust-worthy trustee and banker, and crown and sheet anchor, Douglas Kinnaird, the Honourable, that he prepare all monies of mine, including the purchase money of Rochdale manor, and mine income for the year A. D. 1824, to answer and anticipate any orders or draughts of mine, for the good cause, in good and lawful money of Great Britain, &c. &c. &c. May you live a thou-

sand years ! which is 999 longer than the Spanish Cortes' Constitution." They who are loudest in their abuse of Byron,—who talk magniloquently and most scholar-like about the glories of ancient Greece—and who ever are vaunting the blessing of the Christian religion—would never have given half as many farthings as Byron gave pounds to have seen the renovation of man in the earliest abode of freedom and learning ; or to have rescued what they pretend to value so much—the cross—from the most abominable of all tyrannies, the tyranny of the Crescent. They will subscribe to Bible and Missionary Societies, and launch a *book* at the head of the Grand Seignior from the withered and feeble arm of a priest as bigotted as himself; but the advancement of men in freedom and in knowledge is not the spring that will open their coffers. The crusaders of old laid down their lives, that the cross might soar triumphant o'er the banners of infidelity—but the crusaders of the reformed Church, so far from risking their lives in the good cause, will not only not bestow a portion of their wealth, but libel those who do so. Byron never exhibited a love of cant. He never whined about ancient Greece ; never talked merely of her heroes of antiquity ; never spouted the honied language with the true '*ore rotundo*' ; and saw all the advantages of Greece concentrated in the scholar's illustration of her ancient dactyls and spondees ; he never felt perhaps the deep and pure enthusiasm of a religious crusader—that a life of joyful immortality would follow death in the advancement of the banners of his creed ; but he had read of ancient Greece ; he

knew it as the nursery of freedom and science ; he saw modern Greece—he saw it, as formerly it was, worthy to be the feigned dwelling-place of immortal spirits ; he saw it enslaved—most shamefully enslaved—by the common enemy of civilized man ; he saw this barbarous despot in a Holy Alliance with his brother despots of Europe, and receiving permission from them to tread on the necks of their fellow Christians ; he hated, from his very soul, also, the principles of this parody on the Holy Trinity ; and he warred, and gave his money and his life, not less in detestation of them, than in a sincerely enthusiastic love for injured Greece.

That it was not however whim, or schoolboy enthusiasm, can be proved, besides, from his Lordship's letters. Writing to one of his intimate friends, he says, “ T——, you must have heard that I am going to Greece ; why do you not come to me ? I am at last determined—*Greece is the only place I ever was contented in.* I am serious, and did not write before, as I might have given you a journey for nothing. They all say I can be of great use in Greece. I do not know how, nor do they, but at all events let us try.”

In another letter, he distinctly shews that he had gone to Greece with enthusiasm for the cause ; but with neither blind enthusiasm, nor the enthusiasm of a schoolboy. “ I am happy to say that — and myself are acting in perfect harmony together : he is likely to be of great service to the cause and to the committee, and is publicly, as well as person-

ally, a very valuable acquisition to our party, on every account. He came up (as they all do who have not been in the country before) with some high-flown notions of the sixth form at Harrow and Eton, &c.; but Colonel — and I set him to rights in these points, which was absolutely necessary to prevent disgust, or perhaps return—but now we can set our shoulders *soberly* to the *wheel*, without quarrelling with the mud which may clog it occasionally. I can assure you, that Colonel — and myself are as decided for the cause as any German student of them all—but, like men who have seen the country and human life, there and elsewhere, we must be permitted to view it in its truth—with its defects as well as its beauties, more especially as success will remove the former gradually."

In another letter he says, " We will do our best, and I pray you stir your English hearts at home to more general exertion ; for my part, I will stick by the cause while a plank remains which can be honourably clung to."

This enthusiasm for Greece and glory is beautifully shewn in the following verses, which he wrote on his thirty-sixth birth-day.

" The sword, the banner, and the field,
Glory and Greece around us see ;
The Spartan borne upon his shield
Was not more free.

Awake not Greece—she is awake—

*Awake my spirit !—think through whom
My life blood tastes its parent lake,
And then strike home !*

If thou regret thy youth, why live ?

*The land of honourable death
Is here—up to the field and give
Away thy breath !*

Seek out—less often sought than found—

*A soldier's grave for thee the best ;
Then look around, and choose thy ground,
And take thy rest.”*

When residing at Mitylene in the year 1812, he portioned eight young girls very liberally, and even danced with them at the marriage feast—he gave a cow to one man, horses to another, and cotton and silk to several girls who live by weaving these materials. He also bought a new boat for a fisherman who had lost his own in a gale, and he often gave Greek Testaments to the poor children. While at Metaxata, an embankment at which several persons had been engaged digging, fell in, and buried some of them alive. He was at dinner when he heard of the accident, and starting up from the table, ran to the spot accompanied by his physician, who took a supply of medicines with him. The labourers, who were engaged in digging out their companions, soon became alarmed for themselves, and refused to go on, saying, they believed they had dug out all the bodies which had been covered by the ruins. Lord Byron endeavoured to

induce them to continue their exertions ; but finding menaces in vain, he seized a spade and began to dig most zealously : at length the peasantry joined him, and they succeeded in saving two more persons from certain death.

Byron had a belief in unlucky days. He once refused to be introduced to a lady, because it was on Friday the introduction was to take place, that day having been, for some reason or other, most innocently cursed in the superstitious calendar. On this same “ill-starred” day he would never pay visits.

As already said, he had a great belief in presentiments ; but his actions were often the directly contrary to what his presentiments admonished. “Something whispered me,” he says, “at my wedding, that I was signing my death warrant. I am a great believer in presentiments. Socrates’ *dæmon* was no fiction ; Monk Lewis had his monitor, and Napoleon many warnings. At the last moment I would have retreated if I could have done so.”

He believed that the qualities of our minds descend from “sire to son,” as well as the gout, madness, and the catalogue of bodily maladies which we receive from our indulgent fathers,—and that, as Isaac Bickerstaff says, “one might wear any passion out of a family by culture, as skilful gardeners blot

a colour out of a tulip that hurts its beauty." To his uncle, who was very superstitious, and fed crickets, he ascribed his superstition ; to another of his ancestors, who died laughing, he ascribed his buoyant spirits. Two of his ancestors, also, had such a love for each other, that they both died almost at the same moment. "There seems," he says, "to have been a flaw in my escutcheon there, or that loving couple have monopolized all the connubial bliss of the family."

His superstition was so great, that it led him to have his fortune told by an English Sybil. Mrs Williams prophesied that his twenty-seventh and thirty-seventh years would prove unlucky to him. He was married in his twenty-seventh, and died in his thirty-seventh year. She also prophesied that he would die a monk and a miser. The old lady was not the only one who erred on these two last. They were the only things she possibly could judge concerning of, and from deep insight into his character think likely to take place ; and her prediction has only been falsified in common with the predictions of those who thought themselves much wiser.

He never, perhaps, gave token of the monk, but of the miser, some people think, many symptoms were making their appearance. He was said to have become most particularly strict in regard to the sums to be paid for his works ; and though he

accused Scott of selling his muse for half-a-crown a line,* he was not one that would take a less sum ; and it was thought, in his latter days, he was writing much more for the sake of Plutus than Fame.

As is the case with many men in affluent circumstances, Byron was at times more than generous ; and again, at other times, what might be called mean. He once borrowed £500 in order to give to the widow of one who had been his friend ; and he frequently dined on five Pauls, and once gave his bills to a lady to be examined, because he thought he was cheated.

He gave £1000 for a yacht, which he sold again for £300, and refused to give the sailors their jackets.

He once borrowed £100 to give Coleridge, the poet, at a time he was in some distress ; and then was so excessively "shabby" as to boast of his bene-

* "And think'st thou, Scott ! by vain conceit, perchance
On public taste to foist thy stale romance,
Though Murray with his Miller may combine
To yield thy Muse just half-a-crown per line ?
No ! when the sons of song descend to trade,
Their bays are sear, their former laurels fade.
Let such forego the poet's sacred name,
Who rack their brains for lucre, not for fame ;
Low may they sink to merited contempt,
And scorn remunerate the mean attempt !
Such be their meed, and still the just reward
Of prostituted Muse, and hireling bard !
For this we spurn Apollo's venal son,
And bid a long 'good-night to Marmion!'"

fidence ; and accuse the poet of ingratitude because he did not cringe, nor fawn, nor abuse Southey, his own brother-in-law.

A son of one of Byron's tenants had seduced a young woman in the same station in society as himself. His Lordship expressed himself very much displeased with the circumstance, and demanded that reparation should be made by marriage. This was before he went abroad, and at a time when, though not enlightened by a belief in the Christian creed, he had formed certain rules of moral conduct.

When he went to the Continent, after the separation, he formed a connection with a married lady, which ended in her eloping from her husband. Fornication was, it seems, *contra leges philosophiae*,—the seduction of a married lady, (in vulgar speech, adultery,) not so. The “stern moralist,” in the case of his tenant, proved in his own case a true “Philosopher Square.”

This lady, the wife of the Count Guiccioli, is a most perfect Italian beauty ; and at the same time well educated—according to the fashion of Italy ; and, although wearing blues, “contriving to hide them with her petticoats.” She was led to the altar in the “bright lustre of her blooming morn,” by a bridegroom in “the dull radiance of his risen day.” She was sixteen years of age, he sixty—but the richest man in Romagna. “From the time

they were married," says Byron, "they kept separate apartments, and she was in the practice of calling him 'Sir.'" It is the *ton* in Italy, however, for ladies of rank to have their Cavaliere Servente, words which cannot be significantly enough translated, unless by considerable circumlocution, into English. Byron acted in this capacity, and the too happy husband was highly pleased for some time; but, at last, he began to be astonished at the lady's taking a foreigner,—a heretic, too, and, what was worst of all, an Englishman and a Liberal,—and to put on the husband. He insisted on her dismissing him; she refused, and the matter being referred to the Pope, his holiness ordered her a separate maintenance, and to reside with her father. Byron receiving notice that she was to be shut up in a convent for life, smuggled her away. Count Gamba, her father, felt a preference to the English peer; and having received a more than civil hint to quit his country on account of his political principles,—being included in a list of proscribed liberals—a circumstance of pretty frequent occurrence, and one of the many blessings which "sunny Italy" enjoys under the legitimate rule of its spoilers—he went, taking his daughter along with him. His Lordship, who had also received some very respectful notices, did not accompany the Gambas for that very reason; but remained some time, in order to shew (as all Englishmen do in similar circumstances) that he would not be bullied. When he had, in his own opinion, demonstrated this sufficiently to the government, he took leave of Ravenna, and followed Count Gamba, and the Countess Guiccioli.

Much abuse has been thrown on his Lordship for his connection with this lady ; but those who have been in Italy during the old régime know, that Cavalieri Serventi were, in those happy days of unmolested despotism, a privileged class, beloved by the husbands as well as their wives, and suffered to exist by Kings and Princes, far more cheerfully, than Carbonari are by Francis, the Tailor, and his crowned associates, in the present day : and those who are in the practice of reading these “bundles of precious lies” called “Tours, Trips, or Travels through Italy,” may gather from the mass, that, in her present rapid regenerating to that blissful state of nothingness which she enjoyed prior to the “ever-to-be-abhorred French Revolution, Italy, or Italy’s rulers, would prefer the Cavaliere Servente to the Carbonaro, and rather support a race of adulterers than see the face of a freeman. An Englishman no sooner knows of a *liaison* betwixt his wife and his friend, than immediately comes his “honour or his life ;” and pistols are the necessary consequences—unless perchance he be one of those animals who prefer browsing quietly in all the dignity of their horns, until Mr Philips comes before the Jury with a “lamachree” about the “injured man,” and all the “twice told tale of woe.” An Italian, however, neither seeks pistols nor damages, but is happy to see his “very dear friend,” and fellow-labourer, as often as possible, shakes him cordially by the hand, and chivalrously acquiesces in the fashion of his country which its noblest dames have introduced.

Miladi Morgan, who could say many good things, were it not for her excessive conceit, and desire to shew off by changing her natural "toddle" into a march, and strutting away, with the air of a Semiramis, in the thought of writing into destruction the absolute Kings of the continent, has the following passage on the Venetian females : "The society in which woman holds no influence is in the last degree degraded, and even disorganised ; for the influence of woman is a 'right divine,' derived from her high vocations of wife and mother, and it is only in those false combinations where the great laws of nature are set aside, that she can forfeit that immunity, blended with

" Her nature's end and being ;"

and yet, if there ever was a country where beauty and blandishment, and warm heart and kindly feelings, went together, that country (to judge by appearance) is Venice. The gentle looks and smiling eyes, the female softness and female gaiety, which charm the stranger's observation, Venetian women come within its scope, bespeak a race of beings formed for all the best affections—to receive and to inspire the most intense and tender feelings : but convents and casinos, political tyranny and religious bigotry, are dire foes to the virtues which should belong to aspects so bewitching, and the graces which, if blended with higher qualities, might have fixed the seat of woman's empire among the lagurries of the Adriatic, have long survived but to render her a slave or a Sultana, destined to serve or to sway by the worst of means. To a young

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woman, pent up in a convent, a change is a blessing, even though it should be from the gratings of the religious house to the arms of an ugly old man. To escape from the convent is the first consideration of the Italian young woman, and this can only be achieved by her acquiescing in the bargain struck by her greedy parents with some rich withered pantaloon—the intended husband. Once free of the trammels of the church, she knows that the custom of her country allows her to atone for the sacrifice she has made, by taking as her Cavaliere Servente the object she can love.*

The above remarks are not meant to excuse Lord Byron's conduct. They are merely given to shew that what is disgraceful in the eyes of his countrymen, is but a very indifferent matter to Italians. It is sometimes necessary “when at Rome to do as they do in Rome;” but this adage can scarcely be given as a palliation of his offence.

The family of Count Gamba were banished from whatever state they took shelter in, till at last they were expelled from the whole Italian states.

* Byron considered the order as the antidote of a greater evil. He says, “love is not the same dull, cold, calculating feeling here (in Italy) as in the north. It is the business, the serious occupation of their lives ; it is a want, a necessity. Somebody properly describes a woman, “a creature that loves.” They die of love (attend, ye sceptics in romance,) particularly the Romans : they begin to love earlier, and feel the passion later than the northern people. When I was at Venice, two Dowagers of sixty made love to me.”

Lord Byron regularly followed wherever they went; and it is stated by Captain Medwin as a favourable trait in his Lordship's character, that he remained three years the constant admirer of the Countess Guiccioli. "A three years constancy," says the author of the Conversations, "proves that he is not altogether so unmanageable by a *sensible woman* as might be supposed." No very delicate compliment this to Lady Byron. Captain Medwin, however, might have recollected the difference between the conditions of a mistress and a wife—that the former must suffer every thing and still look pleased, while love and respect are claimed to the dignity and equal rank of the latter.

That Byron was greatly attached to the Guiccioli there can be no doubt. The beautiful sonnet prefixed to the "Prophecy of Dante" was addressed to her; and the following verses addressed to the Po, before he quitted Venice to join the Countess at Ravenna, express strongly his feelings at the time.

River, * that rollest by the ancient walls
Where dwells the lady of my love, when she
Walks by thy brink, and there perchance recalls
A faint and fleeting memory of me :

What if thy deep and ample stream should be
A mirror of my heart, where she may read
The thousand thoughts I now betray to thee,
Wild as thy wave, and headlong as thy speed ?

* The Po.

What do I say—a mirror of my heart ?
 Are not thy waters sweeping, dark, and strong ?
 Such as my feelings were and are, thou art ;
 And such as thou art, were my passions long.

Time may have somewhat tamed them, not for ever ;
 Thou overflow'st thy banks, and not for ay ;
 Thy bosom overboils, congenial river !
 Thy floods subside, and mine have sunk away—

But left long wrecks behind them, and again
 Borne on our old unchanged career, we move ;
 Thou tendest wildly onward to the main,
 And I to loving *one* I should not love.

The current I behold will sweep beneath
 Her native walls, and murmur at her feet ;
 Her eyes will look on thee, when she shall breathe
 The twilight air, unarm'd by summer's heat.

She will look on thee ; I have look'd on thee,
 Full of that thought, and from that moment ne'er
 Thy waters could I dream of, name, or see,
 Without the inseparable sigh for her.

Her bright eyes will be imaged in thy stream ;
 Yes, they will meet the wave I gaze on now :
 Mine cannot witness even in a dream,
 That happy wave repass me in its flow.

That wave that bears my tears returns no more :
 Will she return by whom that wave shall sweep ?
 Both tread thy banks, both wander on thy shore ;
 I near thy source, she by the dark-blue deep.

But that which keepeth us apart is not
 Distance, nor depth of wave, nor space of earth,
 But the distraction of a various lot,
 As various as the climates of our birth.

A stranger loves a lady of the land,
Born far beyond the mountains, but his blood
Is all meridian, as if never fann'd
By the bleak wind that chills the polar flood.

My blood is all meridian ; were it not,
I had not left my clime ;—I shall not be,
In spite of tortures ne'er to be forgot,
A slave again of love, at least of thee.

'Tis vain to struggle—let me perish young—
Live as I lived, and love as I have loved :
To dust if I return, from dust I sprung,
And then at least my heart can ne'er be moved.

Count Gamba, the brother of the Guiccioli, accompanied Byron to Greece, and took charge of the vessel in which the horses and part of the money were embarked. This vessel, and the one Lord Byron commanded, found themselves one morning rather near a Turkish frigate, being close under her bows. Owing to the activity displayed aboard of Byron's vessel, and her superior sailing, she made her escape, but the other was fired at, brought to, and carried into Patras. Count Gamba being assured that nothing would save her but stratagem and effrontery, when brought into the presence of the Pacha, took the first word of him by demanding boldly, by what right he had seized upon a vessel carrying British colours, and upon him a British nobleman upon his travels, and bound to Calamos ; and concluded his speech by threatening the vengeance of Britain for this breach of neutrality. The Pacha, whether gulled or not by the

story, thought proper to apologize, and not only gave the nobleman leave to depart, but also treated the party with great attention, and urged the "British Peer" to take a day's shooting in the neighbourhood. The party, however, were by no means desirous of trespassing too much on the hospitality of a Turk, and so made sail; and, instead of seeking Calamos, sailed for Messalonghi as fast as possible.

A very remarkable anecdote is told with regard to this capture.

"The treatment of Gamba and the crew, while on board the Turkish man of war, was scarcely less courteous than that which they experienced on landing. This arose from a very singular coincidence. On their first mounting the frigate's deck, the Captain gave orders to put them all in irons, and might have proceeded to farther extremities, when the master of the vessel went up to him, (what were the Turks about, and why were the Christians not ironed?) Mussulmen are not wont to be so inactive in any orders to the annoyance of the followers of the cross,) and asked, whether he did not recollect Spiro, who had saved his life on the Black Sea fifteen years before. Upon which the Turk looking stedfastly at him for a few moments, exclaimed, "What! can it be Spiro?" and springing forward, embraced his former deliverer, (a Christian,) with the greatest transport, (Oh, Mahomet! where were thy precepts?) This unlooked for reception was followed by a pro-

mise, that every effort should be made to obtain his speedy liberation on his arrival at Patras."

Mr Colburn should not have sent this "capital story" forth without tacking an affidavit as to its truth, made before the Lord Mayor, by two respectable eye-witnesses of the transaction, to the end of it.

When Lord Byron had gone to the Continent for the second time, and was leading a very quiet and orderly life at Geneva, sailing about on the lake, a very different belief as to his conduct was passing current in England. Even at Geneva, people would not take him as they saw him, but considered him as a sort of monster, and were constantly watching his motions. While sailing on the lake, the people used to amuse themselves by observing the shocking English Peer through their spy glasses ; and Madame de Stael dragged him along to her abode, in order to shew him to her visitors, and lecture to him on literary subjects.

Whatever may be the latitude allowed to married ladies, there is certainly very little granted to unmarried ones on the Continent. If Italian husbands must carry antlers, and educate the children of their wives, they are freed from the vexations of a post-chaise pursuit after a run-away daughter ; the chance of a brace of balls through the head, by the hands of the gentleman courting the alliance, when likely to be deprived of the object of his

affections—or the grievous misfortune of finding themselves outwitted at last by a sharper, and losing the lady's fortune, after bringing her up in every fashionable accomplishment to the age of eighteen. Byron, while at Venice, had dowagers at command ; but for only serenading and attempting a flirtation with a young lady, he received a visit next morning from a priest and a police officer, and was very likely to get himself into considerable trouble through this affair. It would be a precious balm for the minds of testy fathers and guardians in England, if they could rest satisfied that an advice from the parish curate, and a shake from the beadle's cane, could frighten away the gentlemen who have nothing to give for the affections of their daughters and wards, but their shoulders and tongues.

Byron always entertained a high opinion of Madame de Stael, and never took any revenge of her “ d—d good natured intentions,” but by saying, that, if she had spoken less, she might have written a great deal better ; and by praising her husband.

Whenever a man, by the cursed destiny of his stars, is so unfortunate as to marry a literary wife, whatever may be his talents, he immediately sinks into the shade in his own house, and in the world's opinion also ; and if not treated by the visitors with any more deference than a parish parson at

the table of the squire—a sort of privileged guest. The lady of the house is lord and ruler, and the master is—a domesticated biped, kept for the purpose of keeping his lady warm in winter nights, filling a chair at the foot of her table, and carving to her guests. Thus it has been with Dacier, Wortley, Sir Charles Morgan, Rocca, &c. &c. some of whom might have been celebrated if married to their cooks, and some never heard of, as for instance the two latter, unless married to their literary ladies.

“ But, Oh ! ye lords of ladies intellectual,
Inform us truly, have they not henpeck'd you all ?”
Don Juan.

Madame de Staël, like the rest of her class, had not the highest opinion of her spouse ; and Byron's attentions to the legitimate owner of her affections were not so gratifying as if offered to herself. Byron says of this gentleman, “ I liked Rocca ; he was a gentleman and a clever man ; no one said better things, or with a better grace.” This Frenchman, on Byron's lamenting that the rocks of Meillerie, rendered sacred by Rousseau's connecting them with the loves of St Prieux and Julie, should have been cut away to form a road, replied, with true nationality, “ *La route vaut mieux que les souvenirs,*” “ a good road is better than any recollections.”

When Madame de Staël paid a visit to England, she was believed to be a Liberal, and was once in-

vited to a company where were present Whitbread, Sheridan, and several other of the opposition members. To the great horror of these good people, the lady no sooner opened her mouth than out came a torrent of genuine ultraism.

On another similar occasion, where Byron also was present, Madame de Stael was engaged discussing some political question with Canning, when turning to Lord Grey, who was at her elbow, she asked his opinion on a matter in which he could not but most cordially disagree with the ministerialist. The scene caused considerable confusion.

Miss Milbanke was the friend of Madame de Stael, and yielded more to her opinion than to that of any person save her mother. At this time, a double marriage was talked of in the metropolis. Miss Milbanke was given to Auguste, (Madame de Stael's son,) and Lord Byron to her daughter, the present Duchess of Broglie.

While Byron was living at Geneva, the most shameful stories were circulating in England with regard to his conduct. These stories were, of course, retailed to Byron at Madame de Stael's ; and enraged to find such calumnies circulating, he resolved that they should not be without some foundation. Immediately he set out for Venice, and launched completely into the sea of dissipation.

The ladies seem always to have taken a particular fancy to Byron. When he first went abroad in company with Mr Hobhouse, and had arrived in the course of his tour at Seville, he lodged in the house of two young ladies, one of whom was on the eve of being married ; and, although he remained there only three days, the fair bride did not scruple to pay him the most marked attentions ; which, as they were women of character, and mixed with the best society, rather astonished him. His hostess, on his departure, embraced him with tenderness, cut off a lock of his hair, and gave him a long one of her own in exchange, which he forwarded in a letter to his mother. With this specimen of Spanish female manners, he proceeded to Cadiz, where various incidents occurred to him, calculated to confirm the opinion he had formed at Seville of the Andalusian belles, and which made him leave Cadiz with regret, and a determination to return to it. His Lordship's sentiments regarding these cities may be seen from the following stanzas of his Childe Harold. Of Seville he says,

“ But all unconscious of the coming doom,
The feast, the song, the revel here abounds ;
Strange modes of merriment the hours consume,
Nor bleed these patriots with their country’s wounds :
Nor here War’s clarion, but Love’s rebeck sounds ;
Here Folly still his votaries entralls ;
And young-eyed Lewdness walks her midnight rounds :
Girt with the silent crimes of Capitals,
Still to the last, kind Vice clings to the tott’ring walls.”

His character of Cadiz is still worse :

“ When Paphos fell by Time—accursed Time !
The queen who conquers all must yield to thee—
The Pleasures fled, but sought as warm a clime ;
And Venus, constant to her native sea,
To nought else constant, hither deign’d to flee ;
And fix’d her shrine within these walls of white :
Though not to one dome circumscribeth she
Her worship, but, devoted to her rite,
A thousand altars rise, for ever blazing bright.

From morn till night, from night till startled morn,
Peeps blushing on the Revels laughing crew ;
The song is heard, the rosy garland worn,
Devices quaint, and frolics ever new,
Tread on each other’s kibes. A long adieu
He bids to sober joy that here sojourns :
Nought interrupts the riot, though in lieu
Of true devotion monkish incense burns,
And love and prayer unite, or rule the hour by turns.”

On Byron’s visiting the library of the convent at Mafra, “the Escurial of Portugal,” the monks conversed with him in Latin, and asked him whether the English had *any books* in their country.

Lord Byron prided himself at one time chiefly on his being a satirist. He was very sensitive about the fate of the “English Bards and Scotch Reviewers;” but, when once he found it had fairly succeeded, his satisfaction was supreme. He considered, then, that satire was his forte, and resolved to write nothing else. The “British Bards” was written at Newstead: a copy printed at a country press,

was sent by his Lordship to his friend Mr Dallas, for his corrections, with a request that he would see to its being published. When first sent to London, the satire was entitled, "The British Bards;" but to this Mr Dallas objected, and sent the following letter: "In the first place, I propose to you an alteration of the title. '*The British Bards*' immediately brings to the imagination those who were slain by the first Edward. If you prefer it to the one I am going to offer, at least let the definite article be left out. I would fain, however, have you call the satire, 'The Parish Poor of Parnassus,' (how quaint and alliterated!) which will afford you an opportunity for a note of this nature:—Booksellers have been called the midwives of literature, with how much more propriety may they be termed overseers of the poor of Parnassus, and keepers of the work-house of that desolated spot?" A very pretty idea this same; but the wit of it, however pleasing to Mr Dallas, was not suited to the sarcastic humour of the young poet.

Mr Dallas not only acted the midwife to the distressed verseman, and assumed the parson, in wishing to bestow the name, but he also presumed to assist at the organization of the infant, and was anxious to add a member—sending no less than two dozen lines for insertion. "I will also take the liberty of sending you some two dozen (dosing?) lines," he writes in a letter to Lord Byron, "which, if they neither offend your ear nor your judgment, I wish you would adopt, on account of the occasion which has

prompted them. I am acquainted with * * *, and, though not on terms of very close intimacy, I know him sufficiently to esteem him as a man. He has but a slender income, out of which he manages to support two of his relations. His literary standard is by no means contemptible, and his objects have invariably been good ones." This gratuitous puff of some small unknown, may be easily supposed as annoying as the "Parish Poor of Parnassus" by the same hand, so his Lordship gave it no admittance; and exculpated himself from the appearance of contemning his friend's muse, by happily quoting what Lady Mary Wortley Montague said to Pope, "No touching,—for the good will be given to you, and the bad attributed to me." Mr Dallas did not choose to perceive any satire in the reply.

By the advice of Mr Dallas, however, several alterations were made before the "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers," (the name substituted for "The British Bards," and "The Parish Poor of Parnassus,") was sent to the press.

The last line of the criticism on Little, in the original, ran thus:

" She bids thee mend thy life, and sin no more."

This was changed into,

" She bids thee maend thy line, and sin no more."

Had the original appeared, the blood must have been stirred up in the pugnacious little Irishman,

and the consequences might have been more serious than on the occasion of the “leadless pistols.”

The two lines that were intended for Lord Carlisle, but, from certain circumstances, afterwards altered, have been already mentioned. The lines

“ On one alone Apollo deigns to smile,
And crowns a new Roscommon in Carlisle,”

were not printed in the original, but inserted afterwards in Lord Byron’s hand-writing. The couplet must have been written in the short space intervening betwixt the printing the poem at Newstead, and his arrival in town. Dallas objected to the eulogy on such a poet as Carlisle, as likely to discover the author. Byron accordingly sent four lines to substitute for the couplet ;

“ Roscommon ! Sheffield ! with your spirits fled,
No future laurels deck a noble head ;
Nor e’en a hackney’d Muse will deign to smile
On minor Byron, or mature Carlisle.”

This alteration, he said, would answer the purposes of concealment. They expressed more truly the opinion of his Lordship towards the noble Earl ; but, when the latter declined introducing him to the House of Lords, he openly renounced all alliance, and, in bitter antipathy, wrote what now stands in his satire on the “New Roscommon.” No persuasion could make him alter that passage, nor the two notes accompanying it. Six lines that accompanied the passage he did cancel. They were intended to come

after the four first lines upon the subject; when the whole passage would have run in this manner:

“ Lords too are Bards, such things at times befall,
 And 'tis some praise in Peers to write at all.
 Yet, did not taste or reason sway the times,
 Ah ! who would class their titles with their rhymes ?
 In these, our times, with daily wonders big,
 A letter'd Peer is like a letter'd Pig :
 Both know their alphabet, but who from thence
 Infers that Peers or Pigs have manly sense,
 Still less that such should woo the graceful nine ;
 Parnassus was not made for Lords and Swine !
 Roscommon ! Sheffield,” &c.

The passage also on Bowles at first stood different from what it now does: originally it ran thus,

“ Bowles ! in thy memory let this precept dwell,
 Stick to thy sonnets, man, at least they'll sell ;
 Or take the only path that open lies
 For modern worthies who would hope to rise :—
 Fix on some well known name, and bit by bit,
 Pare off the merits of his name and wit ;
 On each alike employ the critic's knife,
 And where a comment fails prefix a life ;
 Let no disease—let no misfortune 'scape,
 And print, if luckily deform'd, his shape.
 Thus shall the world quite undeceived at last,
 Cleave to their present wits and quit the past ;
 Bards once revered no more with favour view,
 But give these modern sonnetteers their due :
 Thus with the dead may living authors cope,
 Thus Bowles may triumph o'er the shade of Pope.”

Here he makes a reference to Pope's deformity of person. “ I have very little doubt,” writes Mr

Dallas, " that the alteration of the whole of this passage was occasioned by the reference to Pope's personal deformity, which Lord Byron made in it. It is well known that he himself had an evident defect in one of his legs, which was shorter than the other, and ended in a club foot. * On this subject he generally appeared very sensitive, and sometimes when he was first introduced to any one he betrayed an uncomfortable consciousness of his defect by an uneasy change of position ; and yet at other times he seemed quite devoid of any feeling of the kind ; and once I remember that, in conversation, he mentioned a similar lameness of another person of considerable talents, observing, that people born lame are generally clever. Lord Byron, in the ardour of composition, had not time to admit the ideas which in a less excited moment would rapidly have risen in connection with the thought of Pope's deformity of person ; and the greater vanity of talent superseded the lesser vanity of person, and produced the same effect of deadening his susceptibility in the conversation to which I allude."

Lord Byron, as a logician, and perhaps as a critic, was not by any means above mediocrity. The contention about Pope's rank as a poet amongst the

* Medwin says that in the first interview with Byron he expected to discover that he had a club, perhaps a *cloven* foot, but it would have been difficult to distinguish one from the other, either in size or form.

genuine poets of England, is most likely known to most readers. The Rev. Mr Bowles, in an edition of Pope's works, had prefixed a life of the author, and entered into a critical disquisition to shew, that Pope did not deserve to rank among the higher order of poets, but was the first in the second rank. The question properly hinged upon the truth of this division, that poetry, founded on the beauties and sublimities of nature, is superior to poetry taking the manners of men and objects of art,—things very fleeting—as its basis. Mr Bowles, of course, denied Pope's title to the first, but placed him as first in the second division. This criticism, as is well known, soon set the literary world in a ferment. Pamphlets and periodicals, with authors anonymous and avowed, instantly armed themselves, and entered the lists with most chivalrous devotion; some in support of Mr Bowles, and many for what they considered the “injured shade of Pope.” This “battle of the books” raged furiously; and no one seemed to be in his senses but Mr D’Israeli, who was most maliciously watching the combat, in order to celebrate it in the “Quarrels of Authors.” Three fourths of those who argued against Mr Bowles did not understand him, and battled furiously about they knew not what: those who met him on fair grounds, the reverend gentleman, as is to be supposed by all who dispassionately consider the question, easily worsted. A vast deal of paper has been soiled by this insignificant question, which does not seem to be yet at rest. Amongst the combatants who poised their pens in defence of Pope was Lord Byron. The attack on Mr Bowles in the “English

Bards and Scotch Reviewers" is not here taken into account, that being entirely a production in which praise or blame was dictated by the passion or whim of its author. The defence of Pope came in the shape of a letter from Italy. This letter seems to have given his Lordship great satisfaction, and he thus spoke of it to Medwin: "I set him and his invariable principles at rest. He did attempt an answer which was no reply; at least nobody read it.* I believe he applied to me some lines in Shakespeare,

"I do remember thee, my Lord Biron," &c.

A man is very unlucky who has a name that can be punned upon, and his own did not escape." The fact is, his Lordship's production was no defence at all as to argument, and was merely a very witty and caustic attack upon the opposite party, without, apparently, its author having had the satisfaction of having understood his opponents. It merely shewed how well Lord Byron, in a comic style, could make "the worse appear the better reason." When he places Pope the highest in the highest rank of poetry, and says that, "If any great national or natural convulsion, could or should overwhelm your country, in such sort as to sweep Great Britain from the kingdoms of the earth, and leave only a *dead language*, to be studied, and read, and imitated, by the wise of future and far generations upon foreign

* Each member of the sentence is a falsehood.

shores ; if your literature should become the learning of mankind, divested of petty cabals, temporary fashion, and national pride and prejudices, an Englishman, anxious that the posterity of strangers should know that there had been such a thing as British Epic and Tragedy, might *wish* for the preservation of Shakspeare and Milton ; but the surviving world would snatch Pope from the wreck, and let the rest sink with the people : ” And when he says, “ In the mock epic and ethical none equals him (Pope), and, in *my* opinion, the *latter* is the highest of all poetry, because it does that in verse which the greatest of men have wished to accomplish in prose,” — we think Byron may be left to settle with his *own* fame and with the immortality of Shakspeare and Milton as he best may. Mr Bowles, in his reply, was perhaps not altogether so witty, but there can be no doubt he was more gentlemanly than his Lordship. In fact, the reverend critic preserves a wonderful equanimity of temper throughout the whole quarrel ; he has absolutely been angry with nobody except D’Israeli, and with him for the silliest cause of all.

The mottoes on the two pamphlets are the best things about them. To Byron’s letter is affixed,

“ I’ll play at *Bowls* with the sun and moon.”

Old Song.

That on the title-page of his reverend antagonist is perhaps better,

“ He that plays at *Bowls* must expect rubbers.”

Medwin gives a story of Lord Byron's first meeting with Mr Bowles, which has been, as it deserves, flatly contradicted.

"I met Bowles once at Rogers, and thought him a pleasant, gentlemanly man, a good fellow for a parson. When men meet together after dinner, *the conversation takes a certain turn.* I remember he entertained us with some good stories. The reverend gentleman pretended, however, to be much shocked with Pope's Letters to Martha Blount." The practice of turning the conversation into *a certain channel* after dinner is, very likely, common in the sphere of company in which Captain Medwin moves. That Byron reported the above circumstance as occurring at Mr Roger's table, or at any table where he was a guest, is highly problematical. The story bears the appearance of "manufacture" almost on the face of it. It is the trick with Bowles' opponents to decry his poetry, as well as his criticism and his morals; and the same spirit which inspired the writer of the above "story," also cut out the following, equally correct, observation: "Bowles is one of the same little order of spirits, (meaning the "Lakers,") who has been fussily fishing on for fame, and is equally waspish and jealous."

Mr Dallas makes no mention of any one having assisted Byron in the composing of his "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers." To be sure, Mr D. kindly offered to puff some one of his own friends who might have been too little known to have been

honoured with damnation in the Satire, but the offer was declined, as has been mentioned. Byron, however, in his letter to Mr Bowles, lets out that Mr Hobhouse wrote the passage concerning Mr B. in the Satire. Bowles believed the statement, and wrote a pretty smart parody on the passage. If it be true that Mr Hobhouse wrote the criticism, of course all Mr Dallas' fine theory about the clubfoot, and Byron's susceptibility, falls to the ground. It remains doubtful whether Mr Hobhouse wrote the original passage and the amendment, or only the latter.

In Lord Byron's original Satire, the lines upon Jeffrey, instead of beginning,

“ Health to immortal Jeffrey ! once, in name,
England could boast a judge almost the same,”

began thus :

“ Who has not heard in this enlighten'd age,
When all can criticise th' historic page,—
Who has not heard in James's bigot reign
Of Jeffries ! monarch of the scourge and chain.”

“ With this exception,” says Mr Dallas, “ and an omission towards the end, the whole passage was published as it was first composed ; indeed, as this seems to have been the inspiring object of the Satire, so these lines were most fluently written, and required least correction afterwards.”

Mr Dallas, in the reasonable fear that the Satire would not be read in Scotland if Caledonia were insulted, wrote to Lord Byron, desiring his permission to leave out the note about the “*kilted goddess* ;” but his Lordship could not think of losing what he called his “solitary pun.”

The Satire was first offered by Mr Dallas to Longman for publication, but he rejected it on account of asperity. It was then taken to Cawthorn, an obscure Publisher, and he offered to publish an edition of a thousand copies, if the half of the profits were given to him. These terms were accepted, and in a few weeks after publication, the first edition was sold off. Cawthorn was allowed to retain the whole profits. The work was suspected of being Byron’s; and his Lordship was highly delighted when told, that a lady had enquired for it as “Lord Byron’s Satire.” A second edition was soon prepared, and a postscript added to it, and his name put on the title-page.

At one time he intended to prefix an argument to the English Bards and Scotch Reviewers, of which the following is a copy :—

ARGUMENT.

The poet considereth times past and their poesy—maketh a sudden transition to times present—is incensed against book-makers—revileth W. Scott for

cupidity and ballad-mongering, with notable remarks on Master Southe — complaineth that Master Southe hath inflicted three poems, epic and otherwise, on the public—inveigheth againt William Wordsworth, but laudeth Mr Coleridge and his elegy on a young ass—is disposed to vituperate Mr Lewis—and greatly rebuketh Thomas Little (the late) and the Lord Strangford—recommendeth Mr Hayley to turn his attention to prose—and exhorteth the Moravians to glorify Mr Grahame—sympathizeth with the Rev. — Bowles—and deploreth the melancholy fate of Montgomery—breaketh out into invective against the Edinburgh Reviewers—calleth them hard names, harpies, and the like—apostrophiseth Jeffrey and prophesieth—Episode of Jeffrey and Moore, their jeopardy, and deliverance ; portents on the morn of the combat ; the Tweed, Tolbooth, Frith of Forth, severally shocked ; descent of a Goddess to save Jeffrey ; incorporation of the bullets with his sinciput and occiput—Edinburgh Reviews *en masse*—Lord Aberdeen, Herbert, Scott, Hallam, Pillans, Lambe, Sydney Smith, Brougham, &c.—The Lord Holland for dinners and translations—The Drama ; Skeffington, Hook, Reynolds, Kenney, Cherry, &c.—Sheridan, Colman, and Cumberland called upon to write—Return to poesy—scribblers of all sorts—Lords sometimes rhyme ; much better not—Hafiz, Rosa Matilda, and X. Y. Z.—Rogers, Campbell, Gifford, &c. true poets—Translators of the Greek Anthology—Crabbe—Darwin's style—Cambridge — Seatonian Prize—Smythe—Hodgson—Oxford—Richards—Poeta loquitur—Conclusion.

Four hundred additional lines were made for the second edition, and, of these, the principal part was an attack upon the vices at that time prevailing in fashionable life. His Lordship was of course, like his prototype Pope, a violent castigator in print ; but, as he wrote for the mere benefit of his readers and the public, he was not bound to follow his own doctrines. Several authors were also added, and censured or blamed with the most perfect indifference by the noble author as to their qualifications. The Satire was not only dictated according to his humour at the time, but it also served as the means of obliging his friends. Several caustic lines, and a note, (which might have been worth a half more than the poetry,) were rescinded, because the author happened luckily to be the friend of Mr Dallas—and some fine lines were introduced praising a Mr Walter Rodwell Wright, because he also was the “ excellent friend” of Mr Dallas.

Byron was a great admirer of the Waverley novels, and never travelled without them. “ They are,” said he, to Captain Medwin one day, “ a library in themselves,—a perfect literary treasure. I could read them once a-year with new pleasure.” During that morning he had been reading one of Sir Walter’s novels, and delivered, according to Medwin, the following criticism : “ How difficult it is to say any thing new ! Who was that voluptuary of antiquity, who offered a reward for a new pleasure ? Perhaps all nature and art could not supply a new idea.

" This page, for instance, is a brilliant one ; it is full of wit. But let us see how much is original. This passage, for instance, comes from Shakspeare ; this *bon mot* from one of Sheridan's comedies ; this observation from another writer, (naming the author) ;* and yet the ideas are new moulded,—and perhaps Scott was not aware of their being plagiarisms. It is a bad thing to have a good memory."

" I should not like to have you for a critic," observed Captain Medwin.

" Set a thief to catch a thief," was the reply.†

To a question, whether he believed Sir Walter Scott to be the author of the Waverley Novels, he

* Why did not Captain Medwin name *the author*? Modesty, perhaps; "the observation" may have been from Aha-suerus the Wanderer. Where should originality be got but from one whose peripatetic propensities are always leading to something new?

† Reader, it is a good thing to have a good understanding, and to recollect that "dead men tell no tales." It is humbly presumed, from want of satisfactory evidence, that the above report is not correct. First, because it smells much of a story told about a parson by the deceased Joseph Miller, Esq., of facetious memory. Secondly, because Captain Medwin has not mentioned the novel, and, more especially, the unfortunate page composed after the manner of the said parson's sermon. A correct reporter would have noted it as the only real substantial thing in the debate. Thirdly, because it looks very suspicious to forget the name of an author who comes next in wit to Shakspeare and Sheridan : And fourthly, because there is a vast deal of nonsense circulating about the plagiarisms of great authors, and Captain Medwin could not well avoid saying *something* on so common a topic.

replied :—“ Scott as much as owned himself the author of ‘ Waverley’ to me, in Murray’s shop. I was talking to him about that Novel, and lamented that the author had not carried back the story nearer to the time of the Revolution. Scott, entirely off his guard, said, ‘ ay, I might have done so, but——.’ There he stopped. It was in vain to attempt to correct himself: he looked confused, and relieved his embarrassment by a precipitate retreat.

“ On another occasion I was to dine at Murray’s, and being in his parlour in the morning, he told me I should see the author of ‘ Waverley’ at dinner. He had received several excuses, and the party was a small one; and knowing all the people present, I was satisfied that the writer of that novel must have been, and could have been, no other than Walter Scott.”*

In the course of his tour in the East, Lord Byron paid a visit to the famous Ali Pacha. Ali was exceedingly kind to him, and every thing was supplied to him free of expense. He said that the English minister had told him that Lord Byron’s family was a great one; and he desired him to give his respects to his mother, which his Lordship faithfully delivered immediately. The Pacha declared that he knew him to be a man of rank from his small ears, his curling hair, and his little white

* No direct proof this. The author may have been amongst the absentees; and, at any rate, Murray invited Lord Byron to a dinner at which was to be present the *reputed* Author of Waverley.

hands ; and told him to consider himself under his protection as that of a father while he remained in Turkey, as he looked on him as his son, and, indeed, he shewed how much he considered him as a child, by sending him sweet-meats and fruits, and nice things, during the day.

Byron, as he took his good or bad qualities from some one or other of his ancestors, seems to have drawn his obnoxiousness to sea storms from his grandfather, the celebrated Admiral, who was so accustomed to have “rough and squally weather,” wrote in his log-book that the sailors were always unwilling to sail with him, and he was well known throughout the fleet by the name of “foul-weather Jack.” In his early life, while a midshipman, he was wrecked near the Straits of Magellan in the Wager, and his narrative of the sufferings of the crew, which he published on his arrival in England, is well known. Lord Byron drew many of the circumstances with which he has rendered fearful the account of the sea storm in his Don Juan from this work—and he acknowledges that the dangers his hero encountered,

“ Are comparative
To those related in my grandad’s Narrative.”

Lord Byron himself, however, was pretty often exposed to storm, and in sailing from Previsa to Patras, in a Turkish ship of war, provided for him by Ali Pacha, was very near being lost in a moderate

gale of wind, from the ignorance of the Turkish crew. The vessel was driven upon the coast of Suli, and here his hap was much superior to that of his gallant grand-father in South America. An instance of disinterested hospitality in the chief of a Suliote village, occurred to Byron in consequence of his disaster in the Turkish galliot. The honest Albanian, after assisting him in the distress in which he found him, supplying his wants, and lodging him and his suite, consisting of Fletcher, a Greek, two Athenians, a Greek priest, and his companion Mr Hobhouse, refused to receive any remuneration, and only asked him for a written acknowledgment that he had been well-treated. When Lord Byron pressed him to take money, he said, "I wish you to love me, not to pay me."

Lord Byron always entertained a very favourable opinion of the Albanians and of their country. In Childe Harold he thus addresses Albania :

" Land of Albania ! where Iskander rose,
Theme of the young and beacon of the wise,
And he his namesake, whose oft-baffled foes
Shrunk from his deeds of chivalrous emprise :
Land of Albania ! let me bend mine eyes
On thee thou rugged nurse of savage men !
The cross descends, thy minarets arise,
And the pale crescent sparkles in the glen,
Through many a cypress grove within each city's ken."

His sketch of the dwelling-place of Ali Pacha; and his troops, is a very graphic one :

" The sun had sunk behind vast Tomerit,
 And Laos fierce and wide came roaring by ;
 The shades of wonted night were gathering yet,
 When, down the steep banks winding warily,
 Childe Harold saw, like meteors in the sky,
 The glittering minarets of Tepalen,
 Whose walls o'erlook the stream ; and drawing nigh,
 He heard the busy hum of warrior men
 Swelling the breeze that sigh'd along the lengthening glen.

* * * *

Amidst no common pomp the Despot sate,
 While busy preparation shook the court,
 Slaves, eunuchs, soldiers, guests, and santons, wait ;
 Within, a palace ; and without, a fort :
 Here men of every clime appear to make resort.

Richly caparison'd, a ready row
 Of armed horse, and many a warlike store,
 Circled the wide-extending court below :
 Above, strange groups adorned the corridore ;
 And oft-times through the area's echoing door,
 Some high-capp'd Tartar spurr'd his steed away :
 The Turk, the Greek, the Albanian, and the Moor,
 Here mingled in their many hued array,
 While the deep war-drum's sound announced the close of day.

The wild Albanian, kirtled to his knee,
 With shawl-girt head and ornamented gun,
 And gold embroider'd garments fair to see ;
 The crimson scarfed men of Macedon ;
 The Delhi with his cap of terror on,
 And crooked glaive ; the lively supple Greek ;
 And swarthy Nubia's mutilated son ;
 The bearded Turk that rarely deigns to speak,
 Master of all around, too potent to be meek ;

Are mix'd conspicuous : some recline in groups,
 Scanning the motley scene that varies round ;
 There some grave Moslem to devotion stoops,
 And some that smoke, and some that play, are found ;

Here the Albanian proudly treads the ground ;
Half-whispering there the Greek is heard to prate ;
Hark ! from the mosque the nightly solemn sound,
The Muezzin's call doth shake the minaret,—
' There is no god but God !—to prayer—lo ! God is great !'"

It is, however, no great wonder that Byron was so warmly attached to the Albanians, when it is remembered what services the Pacha rendered him, and how faithfully he was served by his two attendants, Basilius and Dervish Tahiri.

Of these two attendants he says in a note to Childe Harold, " One was an infidel, the other a mussulman, but men more faithful in peril, or indefatigable in service, are rarely to be found. The Infidel was named Basilius ; the Moslem, Dervish Tahiri : the former, a man of middle age, and the latter about my own.

When, in 1810, after the departure of my friend Mr H. for England, I was seized with a severe fever in the Morea, these men saved my life by frightening away my physician, whose throat they threatened to cut if I was not cured within a given time. To this consolatory assurance of posthumous retribution, and a resolute refusal of Dr Romanelli's prescriptions, I attributed my recovery. I had left my last remaining English servant at Athens ; my dragoman was as ill as myself, and my poor Arnaouts nursed me with an attention which would have done honour to civilization.

They had a variety of adventures ; for the Moslem, Dervish, being a remarkably handsome man,

was always squabbling with the husbands of Athens; insomuch that four of the principal Turks paid me a visit of remonstrance at the convent, on the subject of his having taken a woman from the bath—whom he had lawfully bought, however—a thing quite contrary to etiquette.

Basili, also, was extremely gallant amongst his own persuasion, and had the greatest veneration for the church, mixed with the highest contempt of churchmen, whom he cuffed upon occasions in a most heterodox manner. Yet he never passed a church without crossing himself; and I remember the risk he ran in entering St Sophia, in Stambol, because it had once been a place of his worship. On remonstrating with him on his inconsistent proceedings, he invariably answered, ‘Our church is holy, our priests are thieves:’ and then he crossed himself as usual, and boxed the ears of the first ‘papas’ who refused to assist in any required operation, as was always to be found necessary where a priest had any influence with the Cogia Basha of his village.

When preparations were made for my return, my Albanians were summoned to receive their pay. Basili took his with an awkward show of regret at my intended departure, and marched away to his quarters with his bag of piastres. I sent for Dervish, but for some time he was not to be found: at last he entered, just as Signor Logotheti, father to the ci-devant Anglo-consul of Athens, and some other of my Greek acquaintances, paid me a visit.

Dervish took the money, but on a sudden dashed it to the ground ; and clasping his hands, which he raised to his forehead, rushed out of the room weeping bitterly. From that moment to the hour of my embarkation, he continued his lamentations, and all our efforts to console him only produced this answer, *Μαρεῖνει*, “ He leaves me.” Signor Logotheti, who never wept before for any thing less than the loss of a para, melted ; the padre of the convent, my attendants, my visitors—and I verily believe that even “ Sterne’s foolish fat scullion,” would have left her “ fish-kettle,” to sympathise with the unaffected and unexpected sorrow of this barbarian.

For my own part, when I remembered that, a short time before my departure from England, a noble and most intimate associate had excused himself from taking leave of me, because he had to attend a relation “ to a milliner’s,” I felt no less surprised than humiliated by the present occurrence, and the past recollection.”

Lord Byron, in the same note on Childe Harold, relates an anecdote of Dervish, which shews with what feelings these barbarians respect the kindness of an indulgent master. “ One day on our journey over Parnassus, an Englishman in my service gave him a push, in some dispute about the baggage, which he unluckily mistook for a blow ; he spoke not, but sat down, leaning his head upon his hands. Foreseeing the consequences, we endeavoured to explain away the affront, which only produced the following answer :—‘ I have been a robber,—I am a

soldier,—no captain ever struck me,—you are my master,—I have eaten your bread, but by that bread (a usual oath) *had it been otherwise*, I would have stabbed the dog your servant, and gone to the mountains.' So the affair ended ; but from that day forward, he never thoroughly forgave the thoughtless fellow by whom he had been insulted."

The Albanians appear to resemble our own Highlanders in many respects. His Lordship says, the resemblance in dress, figure and manner of living, struck him forcibly. "Their very mountains seemed Caledonian with a kinder climate. The kilt, though white ; the spare, active form ; their dialect, Celtic in its sound ; and their hardy habits,—all carried me back to Morven." There is little doubt but some antiquarian belonging to the "Anti-breeches Society," will soon be able to make them twentieth cousins at the least—and many a theory has been supported by more questionable proof, if we consider what his Lordship has said of their figure, dress, &c. ; their predatory habits ; and above all their "*mystical lore*." The following story would not disgrace the most gifted seer that ever wore a bonnet. Byron says, "On my third journey to Cape Colonna, as we passed through the defile that leads from the hamlet between Keratia and Colonna, I observed Dervish riding rather out of the path, and leaning his head upon his hand as if in pain. I rode up to him and inquired. 'We are in peril,' he answered. What peril ? We are not now in Albania, nor in the

passes to Ephesus, Missolonghi, or Lepanto ; there are plenty of us, well armed, and the Choriates have not courage to be thieves. ‘ True, Affendi, (that is, Lord,) but nevertheless, the shot is ringing in my ears.’—The shot ! not one has been fired this morning.—‘ I hear it notwithstanding—bom, bom, as plainly as I hear your voice.’ Pshaw !—‘ As you please, Affendi ; if it is written, so will it be.’ I left this quick-eared predestinarian, and rode up to Basili, his Christian compatriot, whose ears, though not at all prophetic, by no means relished the intelligence. We all arrived at Colonna, remained some hours, and returned leisurely, saying a variety of brilliant things in more languages than spoiled the building of Babel, upon the mistaken seer. While we were contemplating the beautiful prospect, Dervish was occupied about the columns. I thought he was deranged into an antiquarian, and asked him if he had become a Palaocastro man. ‘ No,’ said he, ‘ but these pillars will be useful in making a stand ;’ and added other remarks which at least evinced his own belief in this troublesome faculty of ‘ forehearing.’ On our return to Athens, we heard from Leoné, (a prisoner set on shore some days after,) of an intended attack from a party of Mainotes concealed in the caverns beneath, and that they were only deterred from attacking us by the appearance of my two Albanians, conjecturing very sagaciously, but falsely, that we had a complete guard of Arnaouts at hand. I was at some pains to question the man, and he described the dresses, arms, and marks of the horses of our party so accurately, that, with other circumstances, we could not

doubt of his having been in villainous company, and ourselves in a bad neighbourhood."

The Suliotes are a lawless, daring, desperate race of men. They consider themselves the best soldiers in Greece, and in every thing they will have their own way. Byron, on his arrival in Greece, was appointed to the command of 300 of these Suliotes, about to act with 2500 other soldiers in an intended attack on Lepanto. The taking of this place was of the utmost importance to the Greeks —it was the first measure of any consequence he was likely to be engaged in, and he was raised to the highest pitch of enthusiasm. The Suliotes, however, were greedy, and thinking they had a rich paymaster, they were more inclined to remain in quarters, than proceed against the enemy. They were besides very turbulent and reckless, and kept the whole place in awe. Within a fortnight after Byron's arrival, a Suliote stabbed a Burgher, who refused to quarter several Suliotes who were rudely demanding admission into his house, and a riot, in which several lives were lost, was the consequence. The delay of the expedition, and this conduct of his favourite troops, preyed much on his spirits, and contributed greatly to an attack of epilepsy, which seized him on the 15th of February. He was sitting in Colonel Stanhope's apartment, talking jocularly with Mr Parry, the engineer,* when, by the

* This Lieutenant Parry was sent out by the Greek Committee in London, with artillery and ammunition, stores, &c. He

changes of his countenance, it appeared he was suffering under some strong emotion. On a sudden, he complained of a weakness in one of his legs, and got up; but, finding himself unable to walk, he called out for assistance. He then fell into a state of convulsive agitation, and, for some minutes, his face was much distorted. His efforts to master the fit were great, and in a few minutes he recovered his senses entirely. It returned four times in the course of a month, but at length yielded to bleeding, cold bathing, and relaxation of mind. An accident, however, happened a few days after his first illness, which was little calculated to aid the advice of his physicians. A Suliote, accompanied by the late Marco Botzari's little boy, and another man, walked into the Seraglio—a place which, before Lord Byron's arrival, had been used as a sort of fortress and barrack for the Suliotas, and out of which they were ejected with great difficulty, for the reception of the committee stores, and for the occupation of the engineers, who required it for a laboratory. The sentinel on guard ordered the Suliotas to retire; which being a species of motion to which the Suliotas are not accustomed, the man carelessly advanced; upon which the sergeant of the guard (a German) demanded his business, and receiving no satisfactory answer, pushed him back. These wild warriors,

was delayed some time on his passage, and Byron's patience being worn out, he thus adds, in a note to one of his letters, "I presume, from the retardment, that he is the same Parry who attempted the *North Pole*, and (it may be supposed) now essaying the *South*.

who will dream for years of a blow if revenge is out of their power, are not slow to follow up a push. The Suliote struck again—the sergeant and he closed and struggled, when the Suliote drew a pistol from his belt. The sergeant wrenched it out of his hand, and blew the powder out of the pan. At this moment Captain Sass, a Swede, seeing the fray, came up and ordered the Suliote to be taken to the guard room. He was then disposed to make a retreat, and would have done so, if the German, whose choler by this time was up, would have permitted him. Unfortunately, Captain Sass, when the Suliote struggled to get away, drew his sword and struck him with the flat part of it; whereupon the enraged Greek flew upon him with a pistol in one hand, and his sabre in the other; and at the same moment nearly cut off the Captain's right arm, and shot him through the head with the pistol. Captain Sass, who was remarkable for his mild and courageous character, expired in a few minutes. The Suliote, also, was a man of distinguished bravery. This was a serious affair, and great apprehensions were entertained that it would not end here. The Suliotes refused to surrender their comrade to justice, alleging that he had been struck, which, in Suliote law, excuses all the consequences that may follow.

During a pleasure trip which Byron and some of his friends made in his yacht, Mazeppa, commanded by Captain Benson, R. N. to Sicily, Corsica, and Sardinia, a violent storm arose, which, for the terrific, makes a fool of that occurring to Æneas of

old in the same parts ; and, for the pathetic, almost out-herod's the Narrative of John Byron. It is an excellent thing, sitting in one's easy chair, to describe a storm. *Nantes in gurgite vasto*, people have no inclination to quote poetry, and make up a soul-harrowing story. The following is an extract from the "Narrative :" " Sailors say a calm always precedes a storm ; and we had reason to give into such presentiments ; for the next morning the wind, which had blown from the south-west, with a light gale, suddenly changed to the opposite point of the compass, and came down with sweeping vengeance.

We close-reefed our sails, and made all snug ; the Captain and Captain F—n declaring we should have to encounter a strong "Levanter," all our efforts were strained to double the headland, and get into the gulf of St Fiorenzo, but in vain ; so that a whole day was spent in tacking and veering, to close in with the land, to no purpose.

Sea-sickness now laid all our ladies and gentlemen "on their beam ends ;" Count P—, Mr Denzell, and the amiable orphan, St. F—, were also overcome, and the whole were bed-ridden. The sun set angrily, and the wind, veering more to the westward, brought us on a lee-shore to our utter dismay. The elegant Falconer says, in his *unrivalled* poem,

Ah ! were it mine, with tuneful Maro's art,
To wake to sympathy the feeling heart,
Then too severely taught by cruel fate
To share in all the perils I relate,
How might I with unequall'd strains deplore
The impervious horrors of a leeward shore !

These horrors we were doomed to experience : we reduced our sails to a few yards of canvas, and lowered the yards on deck. The sky appeared as an extensive sheet of lightning, and peals of thunder overhead appeared as if ready to dispart the vessel, and bury us in the waves, which rolled over the vessel with irresistible force. His Lordship, with Captain F—, Doctor Peto, and Percy S—, kept the deck, and the hatches were battened down over the rest of our company ; a tremendous sea carried away the boat, which was hoisted up at the stern, and broke in all the bulk-heads of the quarters. For our own safety, all hands, after being revived with a dram, began to throw overboard the guns, Lord Byron himself assisting in this painful duty : The long boat was then released from her lashings, and, as we wished, the waves soon swept her from the deck ; our two cows and goats shared the same fate, as well as one of the horses ; the others were in the hold, and to that they owed their preservation. The two large anchors were cut from the bows, and the vessel thus eased of a heavy top-lead, danced more lightly over the tremendous billows, and inspired us with fresh hopes. The crew were all ordered to the after part of the deck, and again refreshed with liquor. A light was seen apparently in the clouds, which shone from some mountaineer's cottage ; it gleamed with a sickly hue through the storm, and the sailors, with true Italian superstition, pronounced it " St. Peter's watch-light" to show us to the grave: indeed, we were all inclined to think it foreboded no good, as the Captain (Benson) informed us that there was no light-house on that part of the coast, and we

must be very near the land to see a light so plainly. We soon saw the high mountains, and would have been

“ Happy to bribe with India’s richest ore,
A safe accession to that barren shore.”

The Captain, who had been anxiously looking out, acquainted us, so as not to be heard by the crew, that he saw breakers nearly a-head, and had no hopes of being able to weather them. Captain F——n coincided in this opinion ; to which his Lordship said, “ Well, we are all born to die—I shall go with regret, but certainly not with fear.” Dr. Peto counted his rosary, and kissed his crucifix with fervent devotion on his knees.

Percy S——, who heretofore made no secret of his infidelity, and whose spirits we thought no danger could ever appal, appeared to have lost all energy, and the horrors of approaching death made him weep like a child. Those names which he never before pronounced but in ridicule, he now called upon in moving accents of serious prayer, and implored the protection of that Being, whose existence he affected to disbelieve. Thus,

“ Conscience does make cowards of us all.”

The horrors surrounding us were too appalling for human nature to contemplate without shuddering ; for,

“ In vain, alas ! the sacred shades of yore
Would arm the mind with philosophic lore ;

In vain they'd teach us with our latest breath,
To smile serene amid the pangs of death.
Even Zeno's self, and Epictetus old,
This fell abyss had shudder'd to behold."

The breakers were now visible to all the crew, to whom his Lordship gave his advice to lash themselves to the yards, which they did. Captain F——n and Captain Benson took the helm ; his Lordship descended to the cabin, where all were too much afraid to be sensible of their danger, nor could they be roused by any exertion of his ; he came up with a scent-box in his hand, which he placed by his side, and sat down ; he had not sat long when he asked, " Is there any chance ?" to which he was answered, " None whatever." " Then, said he, rising, it is every man's duty to endeavour to preserve the life God has given him ; so I advise you all to strip ; swimming, indeed, can be of little use in these billows—but as children, when tired with crying, sink placidly to repose—we, when exhausted with struggling, shall die the easier ; and, with God's blessing, we shall soon be at rest."

His Lordship then threw off every thing but his trowsers, and binding his silk neckcloth round his loins, he sat down, and folding his arms across his chest, waited, in tranquil resignation, his fate. Percy S—— lay at his feet in a state of insensibility. His Lordship looked down upon him, and ejaculated, " Poor fellow !" Dr Peto had covered his head with his cloak, and was stretched at full length, groaning in bitter anguish.

Captain F——n was removing some dollars from his coat into the pocket of his small clothes, which

his Lordship observing, smiled, and said, "F——n, do you mean that as a ballast to sink you sooner, or as a bribe to Neptune to give you a good birth in his watery palace? The sun was now nearly an hour high, but all was like the twilight of the grave. The sea was long and heavy, and as it broke upon the rocks, the crash struck the ear, as though a forest of lofty oaks were falling by a whirlwind. The countenance of his Lordship never changed whilst the person who writes this had power to view it; but,

"The heart that bleeds with sorrow, all its own,
Forgets the pangs of friendship to bemoan."

The breakers now were not a quarter of a mile distant on the lee-bow, when Captain Benson remarked to his Lordship, "Our only chance is to put away a point before the wind, or we are sure to go broadside into the surf, and perish at once." "As you like," said his Lordship, raising his head, and looking upon the danger; he then resumed his former position.

A heavy surge now swept the vessel fore and aft, and carried overboard the doctor, who instantly sank to rise no more.

His Lordship exclaimed, "Good God!" and at the moment the vessel rose upon a mountain billow to a tremendous height, from whose summit she descended with the velocity of lightning, as if she was going to bury herself in the remorseless deep. By this rapid movement she was precipitated forward beyond the reach of the breakers, that rolled

behind her stern, and burst in impotence, as if incensed at the loss of their destined prey. "We are safe," exclaimed Captains F—— and Benson; "jump, men, from the yards, and make sail;" this they did with tumultuous joy, which his Lordship checked, and told them, "Whilst you are working, silently thank God for your miraculous preservation." He then went below, and bringing up a bottle, bade every one drink, himself pledging them. Percy S—— was removed in a state of stupor to his bed; his Lordship comforted those below with assurances of safety; and the vessel was laid to, under "snug canvas," in the mouth of the Gulf of St. Fiorenzo, with every part of which the Captain was well acquainted. The sea upon which the vessel rose was the means of her preservation; probably there was not, if the sea had been calm, a depth of two feet water on the rocks over which she passed; but the sea carried her safe over at a moment when every hope, save that of immortality, was gone.

The vessel now rose smoothly, and the hour of eight being arrived, all the party were enabled to sit up and take coffee. The doctor was missed, and his loss occasioned sincere regret; not that he had left a memory behind him either to be beloved or lamented. He was a selfish, cold, and unfriendly Venetian, and his only recommendation to his Lordship was the reputation of his skill, which was much over-rated.

Percy S—— had recovered from his fits of fear, and came from his cabin like a spectre from the tomb. His Lordship repeated, as he shook him by the hand,

"Cowards die many times before their death,
The valiant never taste of death but once."

"Ah!" exclaimed the reclaimed infidel, "I have tasted so much of the bitterness of death, that I shall in future entertain doubts of my own creed." A glass of rum and water, warm, raised his drooping spirits, and in twenty-four hours he was the same free-thinking, thankless dog as ever ; thus verifying the old distich,

"The devil was sick—the devil a monk would be—
The devil got well—the devil a monk was he."

As there was a thick fog in the air, Mr. Benson resolved to lay to until it cleared away, and we all began to prepare for a good dinner ; our cabin guests, during the storm, had each of them a fine echo in the stomach, and we who had been rocked upon deck had acquired an appetite for any thing but a gale of wind.

All our fresh stock had been washed overboard ; hen and turkey coops, dove cages, and even the filtering stones for the water, which his Lordship highly valued, were carried away in the flood. There were, however, preserved luxuries of other kinds ; portable meats, preserves, &c. and we had an excellent cook ; whilst he provided dinner we all bathed, (for in the rear of the cabin were two convenient marble baths,) and then dressed ourselves.

Our dinner was a happy one ; the glass went briskly round ; his Lordship was in great spirits ; he threatened to compose an elegy on the death and resurrection of Percy S——, and the Countess said,

set his “dying speech” to music, and dedicate it to the spirit of the storm. During these happy moments, so quietly did things move upon deck, that we imagined ourselves under sail, when Captain Benson came down and informed his Lordship the vessel was safe at anchor in Martello Bay, five miles from the town of St. Fiorenzo.

While Lord Byron was examining Athens, and its antiquities, he found great reason to be displeased with the conduct of the Earl of Elgin, who, after almost demolishing several of the finest temples there, caused his own name, together with that of his wife, to be inscribed on a pillar of the Temple of Minerva. Lord Byron, on beholding this inscription, was so much irritated, and conceived such an abhorrence of this presumption, which he considered as almost amounting to sacrilege, that, with great labour and difficulty, he got himself raised up to the requisite height, and obliterated the name of the Earl, but gallantly left that of the Lady untouched—in order that posterity might know her as connected with the spoiler of Athens. Besides this act of zeal, he adopted another and severer method of humbling the pride of his brother Peer; for, on the west side of the same temple, he caused the following monkish lines to be very deeply cut, in large characters:—

“ *Quod non fecerunt Goti,
Hoc fecerunt Scotti.*”

But, his resentment was not limited to mere lo-

calities. He invoked his muse on the occasion, and wrote a poem, the opening part of which constitutes the introduction to Childe Harold, but the remainder was suppressed as being too caustic for publication. The “*Curse of Minerva*” has, however, preserved his Lordship’s opinions on the subject of the Earl of Elgin’s spoliations. Minerva is described as recounting the robbery of Athens by various hands, and particularly by Lord Elgin, whom the Goddess thus denounces :—

“ Mortal ! (the blue-eyed maid resumed once more)
Bear back my mandate to thy native shore ;
Though fallen, alas ! this vengeance yet is mine,
To turn thy counsels far from lands like thine.
Hear, then, in silence, Pallas’ stern behest ;
Hear, and believe, for time will tell the rest :
First on the head of him who did the deed ;
My curse shall light on him, and all his seed,
Without one spark of intellectual fire,
Be all his sons as senseless as their sire :
If one with wit the parent breed disgrace,
Believe him bastard of a better race ;
Still with his hireling artists let him prate,
And folly’s praise repay for wisdom’s hate.
Long of her Patron’s *gusto* let them tell,
Whose noblest native *gusto*—is to sell :
To sell, and make (may shame record the day !)
The State receiver of his pilfer’d prey !

* * * * *

And, last of all, amidst the gaping crew,
Some calm spectator, as he takes his view
In silent admiration, mixed with grief,
Admires the plunder, but abhors the thief :
Loathed in life, scarce pardoned in the dust,
May hate pursue his sacrilegious lust ;
Link’d with the fool who fired the Ephesian dome,
Shall vengeance follow far beyond the tomb.

Erostratus and E—— e'er shall shine
In many a branding page and burning line.
Alike condemn'd for aye to stand accursed,
Perchance the second viler than the first.
So let him stand, through ages yet unborn,
Fix'd statue on the pedestal of scorn."

Although men like Lord Byron, endued with fervid imaginations and ardent feelings, may be enraged with the Earl of Elgin for despoiling a place endeared to them by many an association ; yet men of more sober and more patriotic, though not so classical, feelings, will never regret the bringing of such remains to England ; considering, that they have done more for the arts than any thing which has occurred for these two hundred years. When the Earl of Elgin sent the marbles to England, Greece had no appearance of being able, or even inclined, to free itself from the dominion of the Turks. Had it been a free and independent nation, or, what is more, had it been inhabited by a people who regarded with any thing like awe and reverence the works of their glorious ancestors, the case would have been different. As it is, it would have been a pity that all which the ravages of time, still more the barbarism of the modern Greeks, and the barbarism of their brutal masters, had left of any value in the celebrated Parthenon of Athens, should have been left exposed to the same deteriorating causes, merely to please poets and travelling tutors. Even now there is more than enough left of the remains of that noble temple to satisfy the domestic comforts of the polished inhabitants of

Athens.* Britain has to thank Lord Elgin for bringing something of the Grecian art to the country. These remains are far better in the British Museum than in the power of a set of ignorant and barbarous Greeks ; and more ignorant and barbarous Turks. As to the anathemata of sensitive poets, they are but as “ leather and prunella.”

Lord Byron's valet, (Mr Fletcher,) whose taste, a little superior to that of most modern Greeks, looked to “ elegant comforts,” grievously excited his master's ire, by observing, while Byron was examining the remains of Athens :—“ La me, my Lord, what capital mantle pieces that there marble would make in England !”

Byron had an antipathy to dancing, arising, no doubt, from his being unable, by the malformation of his foot, to enjoy that delightful exercise. At manly sports he was by no means inferior. At school his lameness was no impediment to his joining in all the amusements of his companions. He was ever first at the battle ; and all his school-fellows allow, that he was not one to be rashly meddled with.

As a swimmer; perhaps he has left few equals.

* Travellers hold the taste of the present Greeks as very little higher than that of their late masters. The virtuoso very often finds the most beautiful piece of ancient sculpture used for the lintel of a door, or some such unworthy purpose; in the domicile of a modern Greek.

It was an exercise to which he greatly devoted himself, and, by practice, he acquired an almost extraordinary degree of proficiency. Whilst on board the Salsette frigate, in the Dardanelles, a discussion arose as to the possibility of swimming the Hellespont. The feat of Leander has been doubted, but Byron, confident that it was perfectly possible, undertook it. He prided himself on the accomplishment of the task greatly, and has taken particular care to mention it in two or three of his works, and, at the time, almost bored his correspondents with accounts of it. The circumstance is thus related by his Lordship in a note to the stanzas he wrote upon the occasion :—

“ On the 3d of May, 1810, while the Salsette frigate (Captain Bathurst) was lying in the Dardanelles, Lieutenant Ekenhead of that frigate, and the writer of these rhymes, swam from the European shore to the Asiatic—by-the-bye, from Abydos to Sestos would have been more correct. The whole distance from the place whence we started to our landing on the other side, including the length we were carried by the current, was computed by those on board the frigate at upwards of four English miles ; though the actual breadth is barely one. The rapidity of the current is such, that no boat can row directly cross, and it may in some measure be estimated from the circumstance of the whole distance being accomplished by one of the parties in an hour and five, and by the other in an hour and ten minutes. The water was extremely cold from the melting of the mountain-snows. About three weeks before, in April, we had made an at-

tempt, but having ridden all the way from the Troad the same morning, and the water being of an icy chillness, we found it necessary to postpone the completion till the frigate anchored below the castles, when we swam the straits, as above stated ; entering a considerable way above the European, and landing below the Asiatic, fort. Chevalier says, that a young Jew swam the same distance for his mistress ; and Oliver mentions its having been done by a Neopolitan ; but our consul, Tarragona, remembered neither of these circumstances, and tried to dissuade us from the attempt. A number of the Salsette's crew were known to have accomplished a greater distance ; and the only thing that surprised me was, that, as doubts had been entertained of the truth of Leander's story, no traveller had ever endeavoured to ascertain its practicability."

A Mr Turner, who published some Travels a few years after his Lordship had accomplished the feat, insinuated that Lord Byron had fallen far short of Leander, having only swam *with* the current, while Leander swam both *with* and *against* it. His Lordship, who prided himself much upon the feat, was in high dudgeon at this insulting doubt, and sent the following letter, addressed to Mr Murray, his publisher :—

" Dear Sir,—In the 44th page, Vol. I. of ' Turner's Travels,' (which you lately sent me,) it is stated that Lord Byron, when he expressed such confidence of its practicability, seems to have forgotten that Leander swam both ways, with and against the tide ; whereas he (Lord Byron) only

performed the easiest part of the task, by swimming *with* it, from Europe to Asia.

" I certainly could not have forgotten what is known to every school-boy—that Leander crossed in the night, and returned towards the morning. My object was to ascertain that the Hellespont could be crossed at all by swimming, and in this Mr Ekenhead and myself both succeeded; the one in an hour and ten minutes, the other in one hour and five minutes: the *tide* was *not* in our favour; on the contrary, the great difficulty was, to bear up against the current; which, so far from helping us to the Asiatic side, set us down right towards the Archipelago. Neither Mr Ekenhead, myself, nor, I will venture to add, any person on board the frigate, from Captain (now Admiral) Bathurst downwards, had any notion of a difference of the current on the Asiatic side, of which Mr Turner speaks. I never heard of it till this moment, or I would have taken the other course. Lieutenant Ekenhead's sole motive, and mine also, for setting out from the European side, was, that the little Cape above Sestos was a more prominent starting place, and the frigate which lay below, close under the Asiatic castle, formed a better point of view to move towards; and, in fact, we landed immediately below it. Mr Turner says, "whatever is thrown into the stream on this part of the European bank *must* arrive at the Asiatic shore. This is so far from being the case, that it *must* arrive in the Archipelago if left to the current, although a strong wind from the Asiatic side might have such an effect occasionally."

" Mr. Turner attempted the passage from the Asia-

tic side, and failed, ‘after five-and-twenty minutes, in which he did not advance a hundred yards, he gave it up, from complete exhaustion.’ This is very possible, and might have occurred to him just as readily on the European side. I particularly stated, and Mr. Hobhouse has done so also, that we were obliged to make the real passage of one mile extend to between *three* and *four*, owing to the force of the stream. I can assure Mr. Turner that his success would have given me great pleasure; as it would have added one more instance to the proofs of its practicability.—It is not quite so fair in him to infer that, because *he* failed, Leander could not succeed.

“There are still four instances on record—a Neapolitan, a young Jew, Mr. Ekenhead, and myself; the two last were in the presence of hundreds of English witnesses. With regard to the difference of the current, I perceived none; it is favourable to the swimmer on neither side, but may be stemmed by plunging into the sea a considerable way above the opposite point of the coast which the swimmer wishes to make, but still bearing up against it: it is strong; but if you calculate well, you may reach land. My own experience, and that of others, bids me pronounce the passage of Leander perfectly practicable: Any young man in good health, and with tolerable skill in swimming, might succeed in it from *either* side. I was three hours in swimming across the Tagus, which is much more hazardous, being two hours longer than the passage of the Hellespont. Of what may be done in swimming, I may mention one more instance. In 1818, the Chevalier Mingaldo, (a gentleman of

Bassano,) a good swimmer, wished to swim with my friend Mr. Alexander Scott and myself: as he seemed particularly anxious on the subject, we indulged him.—We all three started from the island of the Lido and swam to Venice.—At the entrance of the grand canal, Scott and I were a good way ahead, and we saw no more of our foreign friend; which, however, was of no consequence, as there was a gondola to hold his clothes, and pick him up. Scott swam on till past the Rialto, where he got out, less from fatigue than *chill*, having been four hours in the water without rest, or stay, except what is to be obtained from floating on one's back,—this being the condition of our performance. I continued my course on to Santa Chiara, comprising the whole of the grand canal, (besides the distance from the Lido) and got out where the Laguna once more opens to Fusina. I had been in the water, by my watch, without help or rest, and never touching ground or boat, four hours and twenty minutes. To this match, and during the greater part of the performance, Mr. Hoppner, the consul-general, was witness, and it is well known to many others. Mr. Turner can easily verify the fact, if he thinks it worth while, by referring to Mr. Hoppner. The distance we could not accurately ascertain; it was of course considerable.

“I crossed the Hellespont in an hour and ten minutes only. I am now ten years older in time, and twenty in constitution, than I was when I passed the Dardanelles; and yet, two years ago, I was capable of swimming four hours and twenty minutes; and I am sure that I could have continued two hours

longer, though I had on a pair of trowsers—an accoutrement which by no means assists the performance. My two companions were also four hours in the water. Mingaldo might be about thirty years of age, Scott about six-and-twenty. With this experience in swimming, at different periods of age, not only on the spot, but elsewhere, of various persons, what is there to make me doubt that Leander's exploit was perfectly practicable? If three individuals did more than passing the Hellespont, why should he have done less? But Mr Turner failed, and, naturally seeking a plausible excuse for his failure, lays the blame on the Asiatic side of the strait. To me the cause is evident; he tried to swim *directly* across, instead of going higher up to take the vantage. He might as well have tried to fly over Mount Athos.

" That a young Greek of the heroic times, in love, and with his limbs in full vigour, might have succeeded in such an attempt, is neither wonderful nor doubtful. Whether he attempted it or not, is another question, because he might have had a *small boat* to save him the trouble.

I am, yours very truly,

BYRON."

" P. S. Mr Turner says, that the swimming from Europe to Asia was 'the easiest part of the task.' I doubt whether Leander found it so, as it was the return: however, he had several hours between the intervals. The argument of Mr T. 'that, higher up, or lower down, the strait widens so considerably that he would save little labour by his starting,' is only good for indifferent swimmers. A man of any

practice or skill will always consider the distance less than the strength of the stream. If Ekenhead and myself had thought of crossing at the narrowest point, instead of going up to the Cape above it, we should have been swept down to Tenedos. The strait is, however, not extraordinarily wide, even where it broadens above and below the forts. As the frigate was stationed some time in the Dardanelles, waiting for the firman, I bathed often in the strait, subsequently to our traject, and generally on the Asiatic side, without perceiving the greater strength of the opposing stream, by which Mr Turner palliates his own failure. Our amusement in the small bay, which opens immediately below the Asiatic fort, was to dive for the land tortoises, which we flung in on purpose, as they amphibiously crawled along the bottom: this does not argue any greater violence of current than on the European shore. With regard to the modest insinuation, that we chose the European side as "easier," I appeal to Mr Hobhouse, and Admiral Bathurst, if it be true or no; poor Ekenhead being since dead. Had we been aware of any such difference of current, as is asserted, we should at least have proved it, and were not likely to have given it up in the twenty-five minutes of Mr Turner's own experiment."

When the two first cantos of *Don Juan* were sent to Mr Murray, the bookseller, he very wisely demurred about the publishing of them. Mr Hobhouse and others advised Lord Byron to withdraw the manuscript, but he was resolute that they should

be sent forth to the public ; and Mr Murray, wisely considering that, if he did not, another would publish them, and, in that case, pocket the profits, paid his Lordship £1525 for the copy-right, and the poem was brought out, not as printed for John Murray, but with only the printer's name on the title-page. It was folly in Mr Murray, to say the least of it, to follow this plan ; for it evidently insinuated that he was aware of the nature of the work, and yet, at the same time, that his avarice was so great, that he could pander to the immorality of the nation, and—with the profits settle his own conscience, provided his “good name” was pure in the estimation of his pious customers. Had he boldly put his name on the title-page, the work would never have caused such a sensation ; and those wretches who impudently plead the immorality or blasphemy of a book as an excuse for their robbery of it, would no more have thought of pirating it, than Childe Harold. By the “Conversations” it appears that “Murray is the most nervous of God's booksellers,” and that “when Don Juan first came out he was so frightened that he made a precipitate retreat into the country, shut himself up, and would not open his letters.”

As to the pecuniary transactions between Lord Byron and Mr Murray, which, with all the kindness of a brother in trade, Mr Colburn has magnificently blazed in the pages of his “catch-penny,” it is satisfactory to know, that Mr Murray has, by letters in the hand-writing of Lord Byron, most clearly refuted the whole of the imputations cast upon him.

He gives an enumeration of all the sums paid to Lord Byron for the copy-right of his works. These sums shew clearly, that “the most nervous of God’s booksellers” is not the most niggardly.

Childe Harold, I. II.....	£ 600*
III.....	1575
IV.....	2100
Giaour,.....	525
Bride of Abydos,.....	525
Corsair,.....	525
Lara,.....	700
Siege of Corinth,.....	525†
Parisina,.....	525†
Lament of Tasso,.....	315
Manfred,.....	315
Beppo,.....	525
Don Juan, I. II.....	1525
III. IV. V.....	1525‡
Doge of Venice,.....	1050
Sardanapalus, Cain, and Foscari,	1000
Mazeppa,.....	525
Prisoner of Chillon,.....	525
Sundries,.....	450
	£15,455

* Paid, as has been mentioned, to Mr Dallas, to whom his Lordship presented the work.

† In the “Conversations,” it is stated that Lord Byron said, “Because I gave Mr Murray one of my poems, he wanted to make me believe that I had made him a present of two others, and hinted at some lines in ‘English Bards and Scotch Reviewers,’ which were certainly to the point.” The fact of the matter is, Lord Byron did present the Siège of Corinth and Parisina to Mr Murray. That gentleman, however, sent a draft for a thousand guineas, which Byron returned torn. Afterwards, by the persuasions of his Bibliopole, he was induced to accept the money.

‡ The story which has been manufactured in the “Conver-

Shades of Dryden, Pope, Addison, and Johnson! all the labours of thy mighty minds were not altogether valued in sterling cash at a sum like this! The latest of you unfortunately lived a few years too soon—not for your immortality—but for your pockets. The French Revolution had not passed over before your day, “leading in its train” its permanent good with all its temporary evils; the periodical press was not then in its noon-day splendour; and a Glasgow weaver could not, and cared not, even if he had been able to have done it, to read an Edinburgh Review, in order to qualify himself for settling the state of the nation, or guiding the helm of affairs. Ye wrote for the *improvement* and edification of the people, *sed tempora mutantur*,—authors now-a-days write for the *gratification* of the public, and they are paid liberally accordingly.

Indeed the whole section upon Mr. Murray appears to be *in toto* false. If there is any exception to this, it is where Byron is reported to have said “Murray has long prevented the ‘Quarterly’ from abusing me. Some of their bullies have had their fingers itching to be at me, but they would get the worst of it in a set-to.” Mr. Murray’s de-

sations” about Murray’s having complained of Byron’s cutting the third Canto of Don Juan into two is nonsense. Byron divided the Canto because it was too long; but, at the same time, acquainted Mr M. with the circumstance, in order that he might not seem to be “doubling” on him. Of course he was paid for the two as one, as he himself wished.

fence on this accusation does not carry conviction to men's minds: "With regard," says he, "to the 'Quarterly Review,' his Lordship *well knew** that it was established and constantly conducted on principles which absolutely excluded Mr. Murray from all such interference and influence as is implied in the 'Conversations.'" Nobody will take this for a fact, (even though it may be the fact, as we well believe it is, that Mr. Murray never ordered any of his hacks to prepare puffs for his books, or spare the rod upon them,) when they recollect the inclination of all Reviewers to sound the works of their publisher; and when they recollect the articles that have appeared time immemorial in the respectable Quarterly on the wondrous tomes of "travellers into foreign lands," as sleepy and tiresome as the works themselves published by John Murray. Though the reading world may have long given an unanimous verdict against three fourths of these "Voyages," "Travels," and "Tours," yet if they issued from Albemarle Street, Judge G—— was never yet found to pronounce the sentence of "damnation" upon them, which they so meritoriously deserve.

There is no direct interference or influence betwixt the critics and the venders of their cracked wares, but there is an "understanding," which, like that between a blind fiddler and his cur, is per-

* Do the Italics intimate, that Lord Byron was initiated into the tricks, and even exercised, on occasions, the functions, of the "ungentle craft?"

fectedly sufficient for both parties. The one knows the taste of the other, and wherever the smell comes from most savoury, thither will the intelligent animal drag his helpless master; well knowing that when *his* stomach is full there will be a bone to his good and faithful servant.

“*Quam scit uterque, libens censebo exerceat artem.*”

On the appearance of Don Juan, there was a fearful hue and cry against Byron. Those who had, in secret, found fault with the dark, brooding, misanthropical spirit which had chiefly predominated in his other works, now stepped boldly forward, and accused Byron of being a bad man—a foe to humanity, &c. Had the hostilities come from sensible men, the warfare might have been carried on fairly until the party in the wrong had been routed. But there is a class of beings whose interference does always a vast deal more harm than ‘good,—a class that seems to live in a state of what may be called, national hypochondriasm—not a fear alone for themselves, but for the people as a whole. These are the people who see “with half an eye”

“What dire events from trifling causes spring,”

when other people cannot perceive them with the aid of both. It was they who prophesied the downfall of our constitution, from the efforts of a parcel of silly reformers and hydrophobic M.P.s; the destruction of our constitution and morals from “brazen brainless” Achilles in Hyde Park; and the total annihilation of our constitution, morals, and reli-

gion, from Don Juan. This hero was to be the “barathrum” for Britain, and swallow every thing good and precious in the land for which our fathers had bled, &c. &c. The constitution, however, still stands, in spite of the radicals; coaches still drive in Hyde Park, and dashing shopkeepers, and male and female milliners, still promenade there on Sunday, in spite of the breechless hero; and Doctors Commons has not more cases of crim. con. than heretofore, notwithstanding the illumination spread amongst the higher classes by this accomplished Don and second Ferdinand Count Fathom. Don Juan has done no harm, and will do none for three hundred years to come; and had these “nervous gentlemen” broke through the hallucination that disorders their minds, there would not have been such a fuss about Don Juan,—booksellers would not have pirated to supply the excited public,—and party spirit would not have been driven so high by the decision of the Lord Chancellor. We do not here question that decision, although we may regret that it ever should have been given. But we do not hold in the highest respect the opinions of those men who uphold so dogmatically the doctrine of church and state inseparable, and who make writings against Christianity obnoxious to the vengeance of the law. We had always a fixed and firm belief in the existence of our boasted free press till lately; but its foes are gradually rivetting their fetters around it, and soon we fear this weapon of man’s freedom will be nailed to the wall as a memento to future generations of the power of an unholy alliance of crowned heads. There is a mass of silly

hypochondriacs and interested alarmists, who, by forming themselves into bodies,—from that for the propagation of the scriptures, down to that of the society for the suppression of vice, and the less than despicable “Constitutional Association”—promise, by their bigotry and their tyranny, to bring back that reign of combined and high-handed ignorance, over free intellect, once already held in Europe by the holy Society of Jesus. The experience of every day proves that national happiness and prosperity is in a direct ratio to the freedom of discussion enjoyed by its press, and the toleration displayed by its different institutions. Bigotry—Intolerance—and Slavery, are but one word. But mind will not be trampled down, nor free enquiry coerced, without at some period producing a fearful and dangerous re-action. Were unlimited freedom given to discussion, where that discussion did not, acting as a libel, affect the private characters of individuals, the cause of truth, and the Christian religion, would gain an untainted triumph by its own native strength; while its opponents, crushed by their proper enemy, instead of being thrown into chains by the powerful interference of an ally—improper, and unnatural in the fray—called in by the strongest, though the most cowardly party—instead of having the passions of men excited in their favour by compassionating their sufferings through an honourable disgust at a highly illegal war—illegal even when waged against the guilty—would soon dwindle into their “native nothingness;” and their works, instead of popularity and sale, would rot in the press that gave them birth. “No man who con-

ceives his own opinions right, can reasonably object to the test of free discussion : no governments who deem their acts lawful and just can reasonably resist its exercise. Wherever such scrutiny is opposed as dangerous, the inference is inevitable ; for ‘they only can love darkness better than light, whose thoughts and deeds are evil.’” But if the fundamental doctrines of religion are to be defended and settled in Britain by civil pains and penalties, or by the point of the bayonet, let us never more hear of accusations against the Holy Inquisition, for the latter is but a refinement and improvement on the former—a court deciding on particulars and minor matters, (with all the strictness and cruelty peculiar to elated ignorance and narrow-mindedness, we grant,) after the other has settled the generalities.

Byron despised cant of every kind, and more especially the cant religious. He had dissected the human heart, and knew its intimate structure, and knew and despised the hypocrisy with which it shrouds itself. He knew that no man would believe his neighbour to be the saint he pretended to be,—and he scorned the idea that this doubt should be entertained secretly, and the contrary proclaimed openly: in short, he was not one of those who thought that general hypocrisy, and pretensions to goodness are upon the whole best for the world. He therefore made Juan the reverse of a saint, because he well knew that there are, and will be, men with hearts as corrupt as his, whatever may be their outward professions. The washy hero who flounders through three volumes of a “moral tale;

is a “*lusus naturæ*;” and the stupid stuff with which one half of these productions are filled is a net to deceive the unwary and unacquainted with the world. Don Juan would never have been accused if he had not shewn himself a creature, not of pure imagination, but a copy of flesh and blood, and stated many disagreeable, but still stubborn, facts. We do not wish to become the apologist of Don Juan—this, only, we think with others, that when all Byron’s other works are reposing in unmolested dust, Don Juan will be on the library table, the parlour window, and the boudoir. “Neither Childe Harold,” says an author well qualified to decide,* “nor any of the most beautiful of Byron’s earlier tales, contain more exquisite morsels of poetry than are to be found scattered through the Cantos of Don Juan, amidst verses which seem to be thrown off with an effort as spontaneous as that of a tree resigning its leaves to the wind.”

In the intermediate time of the publishing the different Cantos of Don Juan, there appeared from his Lordship’s pen several Tragedies, (all soon about to perish,) with here and there a precious relic to be found after a search under a mass of rubbish. Amongst these also appeared Cain, a Mystery, dedicated to Sir Walter Scott—perhaps the best of his dramatic writings. By this work, it appears, as has always been supposed, that the devil was the first metaphysician, and preceded Spinoza in the

* Sir Walter Scott.

doctrines of that school. The publication of Cain raised the ire of the saints still more against Byron, and a parson thinking he perceived some flaws in the dialectics of him who "gave not heaven for lost," published an Anti-Cain, but Lucifer seems the favourite with the public; and notwithstanding the parson may have the advantage of his Majesty in an university education, he has by no means beat him out of the field. Milton endowed Satan with human passions, "pale ire, envy, and despair," and even on particularly trying occasions, a little twinge of "pity and remorse;" but Byron has kept his Majesty within the bounds of his own province, and though he deeply endues him with some doctrines in metaphysics, yet the world never judged the holders of these doctrines to be in their sane senses. The Edinburgh Reviewers, who had been silent for a long time on Byron's works, on account of their "tendency," now popped themselves unexpectedly up, reviewed Sardanapalus and the Foscari, and of course exhibited a little twaddle upon Cain. The Edinburgh Reviewers make a noise about religion and morality, but do they care much about one or other? They care nothing about church establishments or religion. They (and all true reformers) are above such antiquated conceits, but the bitter example of France has taught them that it is bad policy to deprive the child of its bauble. Religion they esteem a thing at present necessary, or at any rate they think it too popular at present to be meddled with. The world, they expect, will get wiser in time, and futurity will consider them and other Scotch wits as having lived too early for the times,

—“*O miseras hominum menteis, o pectora cœca.*” They not only suffer religion to exist, but they seize on it to find their way to other purposes. The light which has been placed in the gloom of night is of as much benefit to the robber as the peaceable traveller. And let us see do they care about morality. They laud in one page Bowdler’s castrated Shakespeare,* and in the next declare they are delighted with Voltaire’s *Candid*—praise Shelley in one unintelligible paper, and in another make a fool of the Rev. Dr Dwight, “whose baptismal name is Timothy.”

Byron’s belief in Christianity has been very much doubted, and it is likely his name will go down to posterity as that of a freethinker. The conversa-

* Save the mark ! we thought Shakespeare had suffered enough from blundering commentators and mouthing actors ; but here comes another, who does not quibble about terms, but with superlative quackery has drugged the Poet, and physicked him to the very bones—a proper purgation of improper readings—a lopping off with an unsparing knife.—Not content with imposing on us a Family Shakespeare, we are threatened with a family edition of Gibbon’s “Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.”—We shall say nothing about the “Sweet Swan of Avon,” it being impossible that his spirit, even though “hearsed” in the very bowels of the earth, should not have “burst its cerements,” and fled long ere now out of all hearing of the dogs who have been tearing his works to pieces ; but Gibbon, the audacious Gibbon, who would have burned every leaf in his work before he would have rescinded one or two chapters, shall we suppose that he will tamely rest with such indignities ? Mr Bowdler, who is a very good man, and one for whom we have great respect, had better look to it. The ghost of the murdered historian may cry more loudly for vengeance than that of the bard—the latter having been hoarse with bawling two hundred years before Mr Bowdler was born.

tions which Captain Medwin held with him on this subject would almost lead us to believe that, if not a sincere, he was at any rate something of a Christian. “ Calling upon him one day,” says he, “ we found him, as was sometimes the case, silent, dull, and sombre ;—at length he said, “ Here is a little book somebody has sent me about Christianity, that has made me very uncomfortable : the reasoning seems to me very strong ; the proofs are very staggering. I don’t think you can answer it, Shelley ; at least I am sure I cant, and what is more, I don’t wish it.* At another time he said to Shelley, you believe in Plato’s three principles ;—why not in the Trinity ? one is not more mystical than the other. I don’t know why I am considered an enemy to religion, and an unbeliever. I disowned the other day that I was of Shelley’s school in metaphysics, though I admired his poetry ;—not

* Here is another slight oversight in Captain Medwin. He should have noted down the title of this “ little book.” A true Boswell would never have omitted so important a circumstance. A little book on Christianity that staggered the doubting mind of Byron (no very difficult thing, after all, in our opinion,) and, what is much more, was unanswerable by Shelley, who, even while a young man, thought himself qualified to challenge the whole bench of Bishops, must be a treasure worth more than all the Tract Society possesses. It must have outdone Watson and Paley, (for it is not to be supposed that men like Byron and Shelley had not studied accurately the best of the opposite party :—deistical cobblers only take their faith upon trust, not being able to read any works but those of Carlisle,) and might have been the means of converting some to Christianity.

but what he has changed his mode of thinking very much since he wrote the notes to "Queen Mab;" which I was accused of having a hand in. I know, however, that I am considered as an infidel. My wife and sister, when they joined parties, sent me prayer books. There was a Mr Mulock who went about the continent preaching orthodoxy in politics and religion, a writer of bad sonnets, and a lecturer in worse prose,—he tried to convert me to some new sect of Christianity. He was a great anti-materialist, and abused Locke."

Another time he said, "I have just now received a letter from a Mr. Sheppard, inclosing a prayer made for my welfare by his wife a few days before her death. The letter states that he has had the misfortune to lose this amiable woman, who had seen me at Ramsgate, many years ago, rambling amongst the cliffs; and that she had been impressed with a sense of my irreligion from the tenor of my works, and had often prayed fervently for my conversion, particularly in her last moments. The prayer is beautifully written. I like devotion in women. She must have been a divine creature. I pity the man who has lost her! I shall write to him by return of the couriers, to console with him, and tell him that Mrs S— needs not have entertained any concern for my spiritual affairs, for that *no man is more a Christian than I am*, whatever my writings may have led her and others to suspect." It would be consolatory to all Byron's admirers to think that he could, like a devout Christian, always have professed and openly avowed his creed—but, alas! though he made

such a direct declaration of his belief to Captain Medwin, he did not in his answer tell Mr Sheppard any thing of the kind. The prayer of this lady has been published, along with the letter which accompanied it from the husband, and Byron's answer. The prayer has, at most, only a distant allusion to Lord Byron ; but we have the husband's authority that it was offered up by his wife for his Lordship. The lady must have been very pious, and, it is likely, very sincere ; but there is something of ostentation in her husband's publishing this correspondence. The prayer is very pretty, but seems to have had no more effect than any one in the Liturgy. Lord Byron's answer is kind and consolatory, but he by no means concedes that the lady's prayer had, or can have, any effect in changing his religious principles. This answer is a very good equivocation as to that point, and leaves him as liable as before to prayers for his conversion from all the good ladies of Britain.

The day before that on which the above conversation took place with Captain Medwin, while engaged on the discussion of religion, he said, " You are a Protestant—you protest against all religions (a curious definition this—observe it, ye that are orthodoxical). There is T—— will traduce Dante till he becomes a Dantist. I am called a Manichæan ; I may be called an Anychæan, or Any-thingarian. How do you like my sect ? The sect of Anythingarians sounds well, does it not ?

"One mode of worship yields to another ; no

religion has lasted more than two thousand years. Out of the eight hundred millions that the globe contains, only two hundred millions are Christians. Query,—What is to become of the six hundred millions that do not believe, and of those incalculable millions that lived before Christ?

“ People at home are mad about Missionary Societies, and missions to the East. I have been applied to, to subscribe since, and once before I left England. The Catholic Priests have been labouring hard for nearly a century ; but what have they done ? Out of eighty millions of Hindoos, how many proselytes have been made ? Sir T. Malcolm said at Murray’s before several persons, that the Padres, as he called them, had only made six converts at Binsbay during his time, and that even this little black flock forsook their shepherd, when the rum was out (attend, ye Bible Society and Missionary Society subscribers). Their faith evaporated, with the fumes of the arrack. Besides, the Hindoos believe that they have had nine incarnations ; the missionaries preach that a people whom the Indians only know to despise, have had one. It is nine to one against them by their own shewing.

“ Priestley denied original sin, and that any would be damned. Wesley, the object of Southey’s panegyric, preached the doctrines of election and faith ; and, like all the sectarians, does not want texts to prove both.

“ The best Christians can never be satisfied of their own salvation. Johnson died like a coward, and Cowper was near shooting himself ; Hume went off the stage like a brave man, and Voltaire’s

last moments do not seem to have been clouded by any fears of what was to come. A man may study any thing till he believes it. Creech died a Lucretian; Buchardt and Brown were Mahomedans; Sale, the translator of the Koran, was accused of being an Islamite."

Captain Medwin himself says, " On the whole, I am inclined to think, that if he were occasionally sceptical, and thought it, as he says,

" A pleasant voyage, perhaps, to float,
Like Pyrrho, on a sea of speculation,"

yet his wavering never amounted to a disbelief in the divine founder of Christianity."

Those who attentively study Byron's character, as displayed in his actions and writings, will be inclined in so far to disagree with this opinion of Captain Medwin. Perhaps there never was a greater deist (we may almost safely say atheist) than Lord Byron; but still there were times, we make no doubt, when he varied through the whole compass of religious opinions—now an atheist, now a deist, and now a Christian. It was the nature of his mind to vary thus. He was neither an avowed nor confirmed atheist, nor was he a true Christian—cowardice prevented him from being either. He possessed not the vigorous reasoning faculty of a Hume, Voltaire, Smith, or Gibbon, which, concluding that if man was made to worship he must be led to it instinctively, or by the most indisputable deductions of human reason; and could thus, however preposterously, discarding every system of religion, adhere to atheism in a sincere consciousness of its

truth : nor had he been brought up in that religious awe, that reverence for divine revelation, and that constant exercise of religious duties, so necessary to the forming of a Christian. Neglected in his religious education in his youth, he went to the university open alike to Christianity or infidelity ; and there, being more in the company of freethinkers and scoffers at religion, than Christians, he readily imbibed their doctrines. Man is a selfish animal, and there is a pride he feels when he imagines that, instead of being led by blind authority, he is guided by the light of his own intellect. The young philosopher looking abroad at the different sects of Christians, and reading of the different religions which have appeared in the world, is astonished that there should be such a diversity in that, which, if it had pleased the one Great Being, his fiat could have rendered constant and unchangeable ; he doubts, and then finally disbelieves. If he be of a weak and sensitive mind he will be pleased with his discovery, but yet he will be miserable, and will change backwards and forwards like a weathercock. If he be of a bold and invincible mind, and capable of banishing early associations, and holding as nought the opinions of the world, he will die, like Hume and Voltaire, in the belief in which he lived.

Byron's defence of Cain in the "Conversations" is very characteristic.

" I have just got a letter, and an admirable one it is, from Sir Walter Scott, to whom I dedicated

“ Cain.” The sight of one of his letters always does me good. I hardly know what to make of all the contradictory opinions that have been sent me this week. Moore says, that more people are shocked with the blasphemy of the sentiments than delighted with the beauty of the lines. Another person thinks the Devil’s arguments irresistible or irrefutable. — says, that the Liberals like it, but that the Ultraists are making a terrible outcry ; and that *he* and *him* not being in capitals, in full dress uniform, shocks the high-church and court party. Some call me an Atheist, others a Manichæan,—a very bad and hard sounding name, that the illiterate hate the more because they don’t understand what it means. I am taxed with having made my drama a peg to hang on it a long, and some say tiresome, dissertation on the principle of evil ; and, what is worse, of having given Lucifer the best of the argument ; all of which I am accused of having taken from Voltaire.

“ I could not make Lucifer expound the thirty-nine articles, nor talk as the divines do : that would never have suited his purpose—nor, one would think, theirs. They ought to be grateful to him for giving them a subject to write about. What would they do without evil, or the principle of evil ? Othello’s occupation would be gone. I have made Lucifer say no more in his defence than was absolutely necessary,—not half so much as Milton makes his Satan do. I was forced to keep up his dramatic character. *Au reste* I have adhered closely to the Old Testament, and I defy any one to question my moral.

" I always thought Cain a fine subject, and when I took it up I determined to treat it strictly after the Mosaic account. I therefore made the snake a snake, and took a Bishop for my interpreter.

" Faust is not so fine a subject as Cain. It is a grand mystery. The mark that was put on Cain, is a sublime and shadowy act. Goethe would have made more of it than I have done.

" Hobhouse has denounced 'Cain' as irreligious, and has penned me a most furious epistle, urging me not to publish it, as I value my reputation or his friendship. He contends that it is a work I should not have dared to have set my name to in the days of Pope, Churchill, and Johnson, (a curious trio.) Hobhouse used to write good verses once himself, but he seems to have forgotten what poetry is in others, when he says, my 'Cain' reminds him of the worst bombast of Dryden's." Shelley, who is no bad judge of the compositions of others, however he may fail in procuring success for his own, is most sensitive and indignant at this critique, and says, (what is not the case), that Cain is the finest thing I ever wrote, calls it worthy of Milton, and backs it against Hobhouse's poetical Trinity. The snake's* rage has prevented my crest

* A familiar name which his Lordship gave to his friend Mr Shelley. Mr Shelley was a poet, but his writings are of that tendency which will perhaps prevent them from being read by even the most fervid admirers of the nine. His pen was dipt in the very essence of poetry, and had his great genius been directed to some better end than that of slandering the religion of mankind, he would have ranked with the most fa-

from rising. I shall write Hobhouse a very unimpassioned letter, but a firm one. The publication shall go on whether Murray refuses to print it or not. Mr Murray printed Cain, and the detestable society for the suppression of vice threatened to prosecute him. The "most timid of God's booksellers" got greatly afraid, and acquainted Byron with the doubtful situation in which his bibliopole was standing. Byron took fire instantly, and in a letter immediately transmitted to Mr Murray, thus writes: "The attempt to bully you because they think it

vourite poets of Britain. He was a decided Atheist, and was expelled Oxford for publishing a very silly pamphlet, entitled, "The Necessity of Atheism," chiefly from the often confuted arguments of Hume and Voltaire. He not only published the pamphlet with his name on the title-page, but he also circulated it amongst the bishops; and on being asked to recant his opinions on pain of expulsion from Alma Mater, challenged the heads of the colleges to dispute with him. He also published, at the age of fifteen, two novels of the Rosa Matilda school, which were much reprobated on account of their immorality and licentiousness. At an early age he made a Gretna Green marriage, and by this means so much provoked the displeasure of his father and friends, already somewhat excited by his conduct at College, that he was entirely cast off as a withered branch. The marriage, as always happens in such cases, did not by any means turn out a happy one. A separation took place, and Mr Shelley fled to the Continent. Captain Medwin, who has given some very interesting particulars of the life of Mr Shelley, (his cousin,) has attempted rather much to hold him up as a spotless being. No one who recollects his conduct towards his first and unhappy wife, his desertion of her, and her miserable end, will have the least esteem for Mr Shelley as a man. He was a striking instance of that class of philosophers who pretend to govern themselves

will not succeed with me, seems as atrocious an attempt as ever disgraced the times. What! when Gibbon's, Hume's, Priestley's, and Drummond's publishers have been allowed to rest in peace for seventy years, are you to be singled out for a work of fiction, not of history or argument?

"There must be something at the bottom of this—some private enemy of your own, it is otherwise incredible. I can only say, *me, me, adsum qui feci*; that any proceeding against you may, I beg, be transferred to me, who am willing, and ought to

without the light of a revealed religion. In little more than twelve months after the death of that woman whom he had once loved, he again married. It is a great satisfaction to find that during the residue of his life, he lived in contentment with this one—the daughter of Godwin and Mary Wolstancroft. He himself met with an untimely death, having been drowned while crossing in an open boat to meet his friend Leigh Hunt. Like Byron, he wished to die young, and perished in his 30th year. His body was in a very mutilated state when found, and was therefore burned. His ashes were then, according to his own particular wish, placed beside those of his friend Keats, (a poet of some notoriety, promising something, but spoiled by pure cockneyism—believed to have been killed by an article in the Quarterly,) near Caius Cestus' tomb, in the burial ground at Rome. The reviewer of Shelley's posthumous volume says, he died with his hand clasping a volume of Johnny Keats' poetry in his bosom. Many think Keats' Endymion too heavy for any boat. Shelley was of a most fervid, wild, and singular genius; and it is lamentable that so few of his works will be read. Queen Mab, his earliest poem, the notes to which Lord Byron was thought to have contributed, is proscribed. His other poems are something obscured by his wild and metaphysical spirit; and the tendency of most of them is revolting to Christian readers.

endure them all ; that if you have lost money I will refund any or all of the copy-right ; that I desire you will say, that both you and Mr Gifford remonstrated against the publication, and also Mr Hobhouse ; and that I alone am the person who, either legally or otherwise, should bear the burden.

“ If they prosecute, I will come to England ; that is, if by meeting in my own person I can save yours. Let me know. You shan’t suffer for me, if I can help it. Make any use of this letter you please.”

The Vice Society did not prosecute,—they found by their constitution that they had nothing to do with the licentiousness, immorality, and blasphemy, of noble Lords. They had formed themselves into a body to prosecute the scum of the land ; to fine and incarcerate the *profanum vulgus*; and thus persecute into notoriety fellows like Carlisle—who would otherwise never have soared above their native mud. They forget that the common people despise the intellect and labours of a person of the same rank as themselves, and only follow the fashions and yield to the authority and opinions, of those whom fortune has placed above them. If Carlisle could make, by all his writings, a hundred deists, Lord Byron, by the mere publicity of his opinions, would make five hundred atheists. The Vice Society is the best patron dulness, vulgar licentiousness, and knavish booksellers can find. Mr Murray, the High-church publisher, was known to all Britain ; but Carlisle, Benbow, and such like, would never have been heard of without the Vice Society. They did not prosecute. They were frightened : and by this conduct, many who had subscribed in

the hope that Britain was soon to become, under their auspices, a second El Dorado, sneaked off when they found they had linked themselves to a body of suppressors of our vice !

Reforming saints ! too delicately nice !
By whose decrees our sinful souls to save
No Sunday tankards foam, no barbers shave ;
And beer undrawn, and beards unmown, display
The holy reverence for the Sabbath-day.

The society, owing to the pusillanimity of its agent in this case, has gradually degenerated, and if not by this time completely defunct, is but the shadow of its former self.

Byron while at Cambridge fell into the company of Mr. Matthews, a confirmed and avowed atheist. To this gentleman Byron looked up as a person of gigantic intellect—he could by no language do justice to his abilities—all other men were pygmies to him. In him he had to mourn the loss of a guide, philosopher, and friend.* Byron's language regard-

* Mr Matthews was drowned while bathing in the Cam. The Rev. Mr Dallas, speaking of Byron's companions at Cambridge, says, "The Coterie into which he unfortunately fell familiarised him with all the sceptical arguments of human pride : And his acquaintance with an *unhappy* Atheist, who was suddenly summoned before his *outraged* Maker, ('judge not lest ye be judged,') while bathing in the river Cam, was rendered a severe trial, by the brilliancy of the talent which he possessed, and which imparted a false splendour to the principles which he did not scruple to avow. It is thus that the Christian charity of some men looks on the errors of others.

ing this Mr. Matthews was very remarkable. He affirmed that it was not in the mind of those who did not know him, to conceive such a man ; that his superiority was too great to excite envy—that he was awed by him—that there was the *mark of an immortal creature in whatever he did*. It is impossible to suppose that Byron, in the company of a man esteemed so highly as he appears to have been, could fail to be deeply imbued with his atheistical opinions. Mr. Dallas, who seems to have laboured very hard in attempting the conversion of Lord Byron, by no means considers that, at the time in which he was in his confidence, he was any thing of a Christain. One of Byron's letters to this gentleman began thus, “Are you aware that your religion is impious?” And in the answer to a very sensible letter which Mr. Dallas sent him on this dreadful interrogation, (for Mr. Dallas suffered no opportunity to escape him in which he could offer any arguments for religion,) he said, “He would have nothing to do with the subject—we should all go down together—‘so,’ quoting St. Paul, ‘let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die ;’ he felt satisfied in his creed, for it is better to *sleep* than to *wake*.* The death-bed, however, of a man is

* While in Greece, a Dr Kennedy, a Methodist physician, frequently visited Byron, loaded and primed with arguments and texts, in order to convert him. Byron was very kind and affable to the Doctor, but, by a vigorous onset of arguments, and quotations from scripture, he would so confound the ideas of that gentleman, that he would fold down the leaf, for he generally brought a little library of Theology along with him,

always considered as the test of his principle. Hume bore a long illness, and saw approaching death, and yet flinched not nor wavered. Voltaire, too, met the "grim king" boldly, and spouted an epigram against the immortality of the soul in the agonies of death. Byron died more like a Christian ;—he said to Mr. Fletcher, who constantly watched him, "I am not afraid of dying—I am more fit to die than people think." "All is over," said he at another time. "Not our will," said Mr. Fletcher, "but God's be done." "Yes, not mine be done," replied his Lordship.

It was a good hit in Mrs. Williams to prophecy, that Byron would die a monk. She must have studied his character attentively. One of his Biographers says, had he lived a few years longer, he would have died a Methodist. Byron was governed by acute sensibility, and most fervid imagination—both injurious to consistency and sound reasoning. Had the turn been once given with force, he would have rolled to the opposite extreme. It is the case with all converts from one way of thinking to another. They rush from one extreme to

and promise to return with a full and satisfactory answer to the question. It was thought that Byron suffered this man's company in order to make himself acquainted with the cant of the Methodists ; intending to make his *Don Juan* one of that sect. But this is not true ; he merely wished some diversion. Dr. Kennedy, however, believed, he had made a great impression on his Lordship.

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the other : they take no medium. It has been so from St. Paul down to Kirke White, (no great poet by the way, for all the fuss Lord Byron and Southey make about him—but Southey's “geese are all swans,”) and catholic Gibbon. Fanatics in religion, and Atheists, are both deficient in the reasoning faculty in proportion to their imagination. These extremes are always grand poets ; the intermediate, but ordinary. David and Lucretius are great and original ; the followers on either side are mere copyists and polished verse-makers. It is very probable that Byron, had he lived to the age of fourscore, would have died a sainted Methodist, or even as bigotted a monk as ever expected to post his way to heaven through purgatory.*

Byron entertained a very unfavourable opinion of three very popular authors—Shakspeare, Milton, and Junius. He was an admirer of the unities, and what is called, on the mere authority of Aristotle, the classical drama. Of course, he roundly rated Shakspeare on all occasions. Had this abuse taken place in the beginning of the last century, it might have passed ; it being then the fashion to decry Shakspeare ; but at present it will be ascribed

* “ I have often wished I had been born a Catholic. That purgatory of theirs is a comfortable doctrine ; I wonder the reformers gave it up, or did not substitute something as consolatory in its room. It is an improvement on the transmigration, Shelley, which all your wiseacre philosophers taught.” *Conversations.*

to sheer envy.—Byron himself wrote tragedies on his classical model, which, as a matter of course, were damned, and the dramatic talent denied to their author.* This was a severe cut to one who could not bear a rival; and he could have no revenge but in abusing the reviewers, and insisting that he was right. He would fain make it appear that he was indifferent to the unanimous condemnation of his *Marino Faliero* at Drury-Lane; but he was naturally sensitive, and although he attempts to bear it well, yet he accuses the actors of having bungled the piece by their curtailments, and of their having got it up against his will. Had it succeeded, they might have “drugged the audience” for ever, without interruption from the author. The same courier that brought the accounts of the failure of his tragedy, also brought him an account that an old lady from whom he had great expectations, was likely to live to an hundred. On this occasion he wrote the following epigram:

“Behold the blessings of a happy lot!
My play is damn’d, and Lady —— not!”

Very unfeeling, and not equal in point to one by his friend Rogers,—who, when a certain M. P. wrote a review of his poems, and said he wrote very well for a banker, wrote, in return, the following:

* The review of Byron’s tragedies in the Quarterly is very good. It finely ridicules the prose divided into lines of ten syllables, and the plan of clothing ‘John’ and ‘Thomas’ in the same measured phraseology as their masters—which practice, if classical, is contrary to common sense.

"They say he has no heart, and I deny it :
He has a heart, and—gets his speeches by it,"

which Byron considers a sharp bone cutter.

It is impossible to guess at his reasons for despising Milton, but so it is—for he terms *Paradise Lost*, and *Paradise Regained*, "great epics which nobody reads." The same gratuitous assertion is made with regard to Junius; for if we take Byron's word for it, nobody reads that book now-a-days, since it is known that its author was a very bad man, and no other than Sir Philip Francis. The disputes, therefore, about the author of Junius, if Byron's authority may be taken, may now be considered at an end.

It is to be feared, however, that Byron's assertion will not satisfy the wranglers about Junius—and it is to be feared, likewise, that he will not be able to make us believe that Milton's "great epics," and Junius' Letters, have been less read in this century than in the last.

The following story is given in the 'Conversations': "A circumstance took place in Greece that impressed itself lastingly on my memory. I had once thought of founding a tale upon it; but the subject is too harrowing for any nerves,—too terrible for my pen! An order was issued at Yassina by its sanguinary Rajah, that any Turkish woman convicted of an incontinence with a Christian should be stoned to death! Love is slow in cal-

culating dangers, and defies tyrants and their edicts ; and many were the victims to the savage barbarity of this of Ali's. Among others, a girl of sixteen, of a beauty such as that country only produces, fell under the vigilant eye of the police. She was suspected, and not without reason, of carrying on an intrigue with a Neapolitan of some rank, whose long stay in the city could be attributed to no other cause than this attachment. Her crime (if crime it be to love as they loved) was too fully proved ; they were torn from each other's arms, never to meet again : and yet both might have escaped,—she by abjuring her religion, or he by adopting hers. They resolutely refused to become apostates from their faith. Ali Pacha was never known to pardon. She was stoned by those dæmons, although in the fourth month of her pregnancy ! He was sent to a town where the plague was raging, and died happy in not having long outlived the object of his affections !” (Bathos-Captain-Bathos.) This is, no doubt, all very pretty ; but, unfortunately, Captain Medwin has not reported correctly. The circumstance occurred long before Byron's visit to Greece ; and is celebrated in an Elegy, which is one of the most popular and pathetic breathings of the modern Grecian muse. The story is the fate of Phrosyné, and is as follows : “ The girl was called Phrosyné ; she was the wife of a Neapolitan. Muctar Pasharo, son of Ali, fell in love with her, and seduced her. Among other presents with which he won her favour was a diamond ring that he himself had been accustomed to wear. One day, in the baths, one of Pasharo's wives met Phrosyné there,

and recognising the ring, was at no loss to guess for what purpose it had been given. Fired with revenge and jealousy, she went to the Vizier, (who ever heard of Rajah being applied to designate Ali Pashaw,) her father-in-law, and told him what she had discovered. The justice and vengeance of that stern old tyrant were alike speedy : Phrosyné was seized, and with several other young women,—twelve, we believe,—being tied into a sack, was thrown into the lake, and her husband banished the city. Admitting, however, that Lord Byron had spoken of some other story—which we are persuaded he did not—even the one Captain Medwin repeats was not at all likely to have had the catastrophe he describes. The Mahomedan girl, for her transgression with a Christian, would have been drowned, and the Christian decapitated. Nor was Ali Pashaw of a temper to resort to such refinement of punishment, as merely to expose a criminal to the chance of taking the plague."

Nor is the account in the "Conversations" of the incident on which the *Giaour* is founded a whit more correct. Medwin makes his Lordship say, "One of the principal incidents in 'the Giaour' is derived from a real occurrence, and one, too, in which I myself was nearly and deeply interested ; but an unwillingness to have it considered a traveller's tale, made me suppress the fact of its genuineness. The Marquis of Sligo, who knew the particulars of the story, reminded me of them in England, and wondered I had not authenticated them in the preface.

" When I was at Athens, there was an edict in

force similar to that of Ali's, except that the mode of punishment was different. It was necessary, therefore, that all love affairs should be carried on with the greatest privacy. I was very fond at that time of a Turkish girl,—ay, fond of her as I have been of few women. All went on very well till the Ramazan. For forty days, which is rather a long fast for lovers, all intercourse between the sexes is forbidden by law, as well as by religion. During this Lent of the Mussulmans, the women are not allowed to quit their apartments. I was in despair, (poor man!) and could hardly contrive to get a cinder, or a token-flower sent to express it. We had not met for several days, and all my thoughts were occupied in planning an assignation, when, as ill fate would have it, the means I took to effect it led to the discovery of our secret. The penalty was death,—death without reprieve,—a horrible death, at which one cannot think without shuddering! An order was issued for the law being put into immediate effect. In the meantime I knew nothing of what had happened, and it was determined I should be kept in ignorance of the whole affair till it was too late to interfere. A mere accident only enabled me to prevent the completion of the sentence. I was taking one of my usual rides by the seaside, when I observed a crowd of people moving down to the shore, and the arms of the soldiers glittering among them. They were not so far off but I thought I could now and then distinguish a faint and stifled shriek. My curiosity was forcibly excited; and I dispatched one of my followers to enquire the cause of the procession,

What was my horror to learn that they were carrying an unfortunate girl, sewn up in a sack, to be thrown into the sea ! I did not hesitate as to what was to be done. I knew I could depend on my faithful Albanians, and rode up to the officer commanding the party, threatening, in case of his refusal to give up his prisoner, that I would adopt means to compel him. He did not like the business he was on, or perhaps the determined look of my body-guard, and consented to accompany me back to the city with the girl, whom I soon discovered to be my Turkish favourite. Suffice it to say, that my interference with the chief magistrate, backed by a heavy bribe, saved her ; but it was only on condition that I should break off all intercourse with her, and that she should immediately quit Athens, and be sent to her friends in Thebes. There she died, a few days after her arrival, of a fever,—perhaps of love."—(!!!)

The Marquis of Sligo did not remind Byron of it while in England, wondering that he had not stated its authenticity ; but Byron requested of the Marquis to state in writing the recollection of the matter, which he accordingly did. The girl, after all, was no subject for a story, being a common prostitute.

On Byron's return from his first tour, Mr Dallas called upon him, and after the usual salutations had passed, enquired if he was prepared with any other work to support the fame which he had already acquired. Byron then delivered for his examination

a poem, entitled, " Hints from Horace,"—being a paraphrase of the Art of Poetry. Mr Dallas promised to superintend the publication of this piece as he had done that of the Satire ; and accordingly it was carried to Cawthorn, and matters arranged ; but Mr D. not thinking the poem likely to increase his Lordship's reputation, allowed it to linger in the press. It began thus :—

" Who would not laugh, if Lawrence, hired to grace
" His costly canvass with each flatter'd face,
" Abused his art, till Nature with a blush
" Saw Cits grow Centaurs underneath his brush ?
" Or, should some limner join, for show or sale,
" A maid of honour to a mermaid's tail ;
" Or low D**** (as once the world has seen)
" Degrade God's creatures in his graphic spleen—
" Not all that forced politeness which defends
" Fools in their faults, could gag his grinning friends.
" Believe me, Moschus, like that picture seems
" The book which, sillier than a sick man's dreams,
" Displays a crowd of figures incomplete,
" Poetic night-mares, without head or feet."

Mr Dallas expressed his sorrow that his Lordship had wrote nothing else. Byron then told him that he had written occasionally some verses, in Spenser's measure, relative to the countries he had visited. " They are not worth troubling you with," said his Lordship, " but you shall have them all with you." He then took " Childe Harold's Pilgrimage" from a trunk, and delivered it to him. Mr Dallas having read the poem, was in raptures with it. He instantly resolved to do his utmost in suffocating the " Hints from Horace" before their birth, and to bring out Childe Harold. He urged Byron

to publish this last poem ; but he was unwilling, and preferred to have the ‘ Hints’ published. He would not be convinced of the great merit of the Childe—and, as some person had seen it before Mr Dallas, and expressed disapprobation, Byron was by no means sure of its kind reception by the world. In a short time afterwards, however, he agreed to its publication, and requested Mr Dallas not to deal with Cawthorn, but offer it to Miller of Albemarle Street. He wished a fashionable publisher, but Miller declined publishing it, chiefly on account of the remarks it contained on Lord Elgin, whose publisher he was. Longman had refused to publish ‘ The Satire,’ and Byron would not suffer any of his works to come from that house. The work was therefore carried to Mr Murray, who then kept a shop opposite St Dunstan Church in Fleet Street. Mr Murray had expressed a desire to publish for Lord Byron, and regretted that Mr Dallas had not taken the “ English Bards and Scotch Reviewers” to him—but this was after its success.

Mr. Dallas strenuously objected to several passages in the poem, but although he procured some alterations, he could by no means get the author to clothe it in all Christian humility. Mr. D. made a dead halt at the following stanza :

Frown not on me, churlish priest ! that I
Look not for life, where life may never be ;
I am no sneerer at thy phantacy ;
Thou pitiest me,—alas ! I envy thee,
Thou bold discoverer in an unknown sea,
Of happy isles, and happier tenants there ;
I ask thee not to prove a Sadducee.
Still dream of Paradise, thou knowest not where,
But lov'st too well to bid thine erring brother share.

After a long contention, that beautiful stanza, beginning,

" Yet if, as holiest men have deem'd," &c.

was substituted for it :—a note in the freethinking style was also omitted.

Mr Dallas, who so ably fulfilled the duties of accoucheur to the Childe, was also resolved that it should not come into the world without a sufficient enunciation ; and, accordingly, prepared a review of it for a literary journal to be published immediately on the appearance of the poem. By a very awkward mistake, however, the review appeared before the thing reviewed ; and Byron was greatly vexed, from a very likely supposition that he would be considered the author of it. Mr. Dallas, however, explained, and the matter was made up.

After the publication of Childe Harold, and more especially, after the Corsair, Lara, &c. which soon followed, Lord Byron became a favourite. He was assailed by congratulatory letters from all quarters, from males and females.* He had despised women,

* He even received a congratulatory epistle from " hoarse Fitzgerald," the first poet satirized in the " English Bards and Scotch Reviewers." This was very handsome, and shewed that the small-beer poet was of a much more forgiving

but flattery won upon him, and he now paid great attention to the fair sex. To his sister, with whom he had formerly had little or no connection, he sent a copy of his Childe Harold with the following on the fly-leaf—“To Augusta, my dearest sister, and my best friend, who has ever loved me much better than I deserved, this volume is presented by her *father's* son, and most affectionate brother, B.”—He became quite the talk of the day, and many a delicate hand was busied in communicating with the noble peer and poet.

Some mad lady, who had persuaded herself that she knew a great deal about Byron, wrote a novel introducing him as her hero, and pourtraying his character. The book took for a little, because Byron's intimacy with the lady, at one time, was well known; but its extravagance, and utter ignorance and perversion, very soon sent it to rest in the tomb of the Capulets. It contained one letter of Byron's, and likewise one or two of his early pieces of poetry.

The laurel-crown has generally proved to its possessor, in England at least, a crown of thorns. The Poet Laureate has always been a mark for the wit and satire of his brother poets. The enmity betwixt Byron and Dr Southey is as well known as that which existed betwixt Pope and Colly Cibber. Dr Southey, the present Poet Laureate, was in his

spirit than the Poet Laureate. It may be observed, however, that the satire had little permanent effect on Mr F. he having of late commenced again to “bawl his creaking couplets” at the Literary Society dinners.

youth, and during the greater part of his manhood, a violent democrat. In these days he wrote “Wat Tyler,” which the Lord Chancellor declared so abominable as to be beyond the protection of the law ; he also wrote several other pieces which evinced very little desire to minister to the pride of kings. With years, however, he gathered wisdom ; and when made Poet Laureate, he gave his principles a turn ; and the once professed revolutionist became a most violent upholder of royal state and prerogative. It is always thus with turn-coats ; Southey and Wordsworth, who were once noted republicans, no sooner became the one Laureate, and the other a Commissioner of Stamps, than their eyes were opened,—they saw the error of their ways, and turned into the right path ; and Mister George Colman, who, in the prime of his days, wrote indecent plays, and poetic libels on churchmen, no sooner was made, in his extreme old age, deputy licenser of plays—which office fell on him like “a light from above,” than instead of an “old sinner,” he became “a new man,” a moralist and a methodist. It was not, however, so much on account of political principles that the enmity between Byron and Southey was kept up. The Peer, in his Satire, had handled the epics of the Laureate very roughly : this he could never forgive ; and therefore took every means of being revenged on his Lordship. Whilst travelling on the Continent, he observed Shelley’s name in the Album at Mont Auvert, with “Aθεος” wrote after it, and an indignant comment in the same language wrote under it, and the names of some of Byron’s other friends. The Doctor,

with all the eagerness of a traveller, wrote down the names and the comment,* and, on his return to England, soon bandied about the whole circumstance, and hesitated not to conclude Byron of the same principles as his friends. In the "Vision," a work intending,

" By dint of high heroic verse,"

to shew that the father of his people, George the Third, our late never-enough-to-be-lamented Sovereign, had, in spite of all suppositions to the contrary, attained the kingdom of Heaven, he took notice of Byron as the father of what he termed the "Satanic School of Poetry." The Doctor considered this name as very appropriate, and very satirical; but unfortunately the Laureate, however qualified to bruise with his leaden mallet of reasoning, in the Quarterly, was never made for playing with the sharp sword of satire. Lord Byron was never one that would yield to an antagonist. He became furious in his abuse of Southey, and even descended to abuse his wife, the sister of Coleridge,—they having been at one time "two milliners of Bath." In a note appended to the "Two Foscari," he, in a most unfeeling and ungentlemanly manner, attacks both Southey and his wife. Dr Southey wrote an answer to this note in the Courier, which, when Byron saw, put him in a most violent passion, and

* Some person, with more sense than Dr Southey, added "*μωρος*" to Shelley's name, and Byron, on his visit to Mont Auvert, scratched out both *Aθεος* and *μωρος*.

he consulted with his friends whether or not he would require to go to England to answer it personally. In more cool moments, however, he resolved merely to publish *his* "Vision of Judgment," as an antidote to that of the Laureate,—which, by the way, fell dead born from the press. "The Vision of Judgment by Queredo Redivivus" accordingly appeared in one of the numbers of the "Liberal;" and as Mr Hunt was the publisher of this, he was prosecuted by the "Bridge-street Gang," or "Constitutional Association,"—not for the blasphemy of the poem, for though eminent in this respect, it is not equal to that of the Laureate, but for a libel on his Majesty, George the Fourth, whose name or person is never once alluded to in the whole poem. It was, if any thing, a libel on the shade of George the Third, and, instead of the "poor ghost's" visiting, "in the glimpses of the moon," the Attorney-General, he called upon the pimp of the Constitutional Association, who, stirred up by the "horrible, horrible, most horrible" case, "with wings as swift as meditation, or the thoughts of love," flew to revenge through the medium of a packed jury. The verdict of guilty, even although expected as a matter of course, brought astonishment to a great many. It has happily added one more clear precedent to curb the freedom of our press. It would have been an excellent thing, however, if the Lord Chief Justice had declared in what generation the feelings of descendants will not be hurt by the remarks made on their progenitors. If a libel on the father is a libel on the son, it may be so to the third or fourth generation; and an author laughing at "the good

King Jamie," or sneering at the impiously-styled " blessed martyr," his son, may be liable to an indictment for offending the feelings of their lineal descendant, and *orthodoxically* legitimate successor.* The errors of the mighty dead must rest with their bones, and the time to be laid hold of for abusing a deceased monarch, can only properly be taken from the temper of the court: For instance, it is the fashion here at present to pity and praise the tyrannical house of the Stuarts, and to allow free discussion and abuse on all participants in commotions called Revolutions. How long will this last?

In the Vision of Judgment, he lashes the Laureate more severely than ever; but though, at a first reading, we cannot help laughing at the following description of him, yet, on a second, we cannot help enquiring whether any conduct of Dr Southey's could have given just cause for such invincible enmity.

" He said—(I only give the heads)—he said,
 He meant no harm in scribbling; 'twas his way
 Upon all topics; 'twas, besides, his bread,
 Of which he butter'd both sides; 'twould delay
 Too long the assembly, (he was pleased to dread)
 And take up rather more time than a day,
 To name his works—he would but cite a few—
 Wat Tyler—Rhymes on Blenheim—Waterloo.

He had written praises of a regicide;
 He had written praises of all kings whatever;

* For this, see Scottish, and particularly Scotch Episcopalian addresses for 1822.

He had written for republics far and wide,
And then against them bitterer than ever;
For pantisocracy he once had cried
Aloud, a scheme less moral than 'twas clever;
Then grew a hearty anti-jacobin—
Had turn'd his coat—and would have turn'd his skin.

He had sung against all battles, and again
In their high praise and glory; he had call'd
Reviewing "the ungentle craft," and then
Become as base a critic as ere crawl'd—
Fed, paid, and pamper'd by the very men
By whom his muse and morals had been maul'd:
He had written much blank verse, and blander prose,
And more of both than any body knows.

He had written Wesley's life:—here, turning round
To Sathan, 'Sir, I'm ready to write yours,
In two octavo volumes, nicely bound,
With notes and preface, all that most allureth
The pious purchaser; and there's no ground
For fear, for I can choose my own reviewers:
So let me have the proper documents,
That I may add you to my other saints,'" &c.

On a calm review of the whole quarrel, every one will see that Byron made the first attack, and then put himself in a passion because Dr Southey did not succumb, and bear the lash unresistingly. To every one who examines both sides, Byron's conduct must appear mean, cowardly, and brutal, compared to that of his opponent. Dr Southey never libelled a woman because the wife of his enemy,—Lord Byron did so. Let it stand against him a slur on the man and the Peer, and the only example of meanness in the annals of literary warfare in England. Mr Dallas has declared, that there is no sincerity

in Byron's dedications. We partly believe it—and the fulsome adulations heaped upon Moore, and more so on Rogers, the least deserving of the two, (being a poet only in the "Pleasures of Memory," and a scribbler puffed by dinner-loving critics, and female Mæcenases in his other works,) in the "Conversations," and elsewhere, savour very much of the flattered patron. Had Southey, Wordsworth, or Coleridge, curried the favour of his Lordship, after suffering his kicks and cuffs, the Laureate and the Lakists would have been in as high favour as any. But Dr Southey, save as a poet, was immeasurably Byron's superior in every perfection of intellect, and with that honourable spirit which conscious genius feels against insult, he scorned to beg the protection of one who had wantonly attacked him, even though the Lion of the day. While Byron lived, we delighted to see Dr Southey defending himself so fearlessly from such rancorous calumnies; and even now that the enemy is gone, we, though a majority will be of a different opinion, see no harm in his defending himself from the libels in the posthumous works of his Lordship.* It is all trash about letting his vices sleep with him:—*He* was never the disciple of this doctrine. When he wished, he dragged the dead from their graves, and exposed the loathed carcase to the world. The vices as well as the virtues of the great, are the manuals for the study of poste-

* The answers to Byron from Southey will be found in the Courier, or in the Numbers of Blackwood's Magazine,—its Editor having, with a fairness worthy of imitation by the opposite party, given both sides of the affair.

rity. The one is just of as much importance to be known in order to be avoided, as the other in order to be followed : The reef of rocks must be laid down in the chart, as well as the entrance of the haven. Byron despised the cant which confers saintship by death ; let not any, therefore, be displeased with him who will refuse canonization to the dead man, particularly if he was the open foe of the living one.

Byron fell into company with Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, at the Lakes. The Shepherd was standing at the inn door of Ambleside, "gaping at nothing," when out came a strapping young man from the house, and off with his hat and out with his hand. Hogg did not know him, and, appearing at a dead halt, the other relieved him by saying, "Mr. Hogg, I hope you will excuse me, my name is Byron—and I cannot help thinking that we ought to hold ourselves acquainted." The poets accordingly shook hands immediately, and while they continued at the Lakes were hand and glove,—drank furiously together,—and laughed at their brother bards. On Byron's leaving the Lakes, he sent Hogg a letter quizzing the Lakes, which the Shepherd was so mischievous as to shew to them.

Byron's antipathy to the Apollo of the Lakes, Wordsworth, is as unaccountable as that to Southey, perhaps more so ; for Wordsworth, even although a commissioner of stamps, is not inflated with the religious cant and party spirit of his friend the Laureate. Whatever may be the opinions left by Byron, and some often falsified Reviewers, of this poet,

there is little doubt that a hundred years hence, Wordsworth will not be the least beautiful, nor the least conspicuous star in the bright galaxy of poets of the nineteenth century. It was unfair also in Byron to retain an enmity to a poet to whom he was so much indebted. He pretends to laugh at the Lake-school, and sneers at Shelley's dosing him with Wordsworth; for Shelley was a noble Laker, and only readable in his inspirations from nature—but after all, there are many stanzas of the last cantos of Childe Harold which demonstrate that Lord Byron had drank deeply in the stream.

In the “Conversations,” there is an epitaph intended for Southeby—not wrote by Byron, but said to have been sent to him from Paris. His Lordship made no remarks upon it—probably he put it in the fire—for he had too good a memory not to recollect that the wit in it was stolen from a well known epitaph,—and too good a taste not to perceive that the rest was abominably silly trash.

Polidori was physician and companion to Lord Byron for a considerable time. He was something vain, and once asked Byron, what he could do that he, Polidori, could not do. “I think,” Byron says, “I named four things—that I could swim four miles—write a book of which four thousand copies should be sold in one day—drink four bottles of wine—and I forget what the other was, but it is not worth mentioning.”

Polidori quarrelled with Byron,—for he could not bear unruffled the whims of his Lordship. He came to England, and having published the “Vampyre,” a romance, which had a great run at the time, took to regularly writing books instead of prescriptions, and, being deceived in his expectation of profit and honour, swallowed poison.

A female tourist, who had visited Venice pen in hand, stated in her “Sketches,” (as an excuse for never having been in the company and having nothing to say of the only being worth speaking about in Venice,) that she could have been introduced to Lord Byron, but would not. This imprudent assertion, instead of an apology for her own insignificance, violently excited his Lordship’s ire ; and in a note appended to the “Doge of Venice,” he expresses his detestation for all “travelling English,” and adds a list of those English gentlemen who had visited him whilst at Venice. Byron was not aware that the writer was a literary *lady*, otherwise he would not have been so offended. Many have supposed from this note, from some of his writings, and from his conduct, that he hated Britain and her inhabitants : but this is not correct. Byron would never have lived in that land where despots suffer not a single ray of liberty to shine upon a people—once great—but now even unworthy of the boon, if circumstances would have allowed him to have remained in Britain. In England he must have come into contact with many persons disagreeable to him—he must have every day heard malicious reports—and

every day perceived himself watched. It was impossible that any one with the temper and passions of Lord Byron, and placed in similar circumstances, could have felt comfortable in Britain. Besides, he had been satiated with every thing London could give, and fled to the continent for variety—and, had not Greece called his attention from the continent, he would have fled to America for the same reason.

Though he sometimes sneered at his country and his countrymen, yet had there ever such a commotion arisen as to endanger Britain, Byron would have been found in his proper place. He was an aristocrat by birth, and one too by feelings; and besides a poet must be a patriot. He left a fortune to an offspring of his continental amours on condition that she should not marry an Englishman; but this, most likely the whim of the moment, must not stand as his condemnation of his countrymen.

Byron was very unsettled in his dietetics. At one time he indulged in full living, and at the next would have starved himself on a biscuit a day. Of wine he drank to a great extent; and during the latter period of his stay in Italy, he indulged much in Hollands. “Why don’t you drink?” said he one day to Medwin; “gin and water is the source of all my inspiration. If you were to drink as much as I do, you would write as good verses: depend on it, it is the true Hippocrene.” He drank a pint of Hollands almost every night. The following is a kind of anacreontic which he composed in one of his hours of jovialty.

Fill the goblet again, for I never before
Felt the glow that now gladdens my heart to its core :
Let us drink—who would not ? since thro' life's varied round,
In the goblet alone no deception is found.

I have tried in its turn all that life can supply ;
I have bask'd in the beams of a dark rolling eye ;
I have loved—who has not ? but what tongue will declare
That pleasure existed while passion was there.

In the days of our youth, when the heart's in its spring,
And dreams that affection can never take wing,
I had friends—who has not ? but what tongue will avow
That friends, rosy wine, are so faithful as thou ?

The breast of a mistress some boy may estrange ;
Friendship shifts with the sunbeam,—thou never canst change.
Thou grow'st old—who does not ?—but on earth what appears,
Whose virtues, like thine, but increase with our years ?

Yet if blest to the utmost that love can bestow,
Should a rival bow down to her idol below,
We are jealous—who's not ? THOU hast no such alloy,
For the more that enjoy thee, the more they enjoy.

When the season of youth and its jollities past,
For refuge we fly to the goblet at last ;
Then we find—who does not ? in the flow of the soul,
That truth, as of yore, is confined to the bowl.

When the box of Pandora was open'd on earth,
And Memory's triumph commenced over Mirth,
Hope was left—was she not ? but the goblet WE kiss,
And care not for hope who are certain of bliss.

Long life to the grape ! and when summer is flown,
The age of our nectar shall gladden my own.
We must die—who does not ? may our sins be forgiven !
And Hebe shall never be idle in Heaven.

In the "Conversations," a very good story is recorded as told by his Lordship. Byron was very fond of private theatres, and, along with some friends, once got up a play at Cambridge. "On the day of representation, one of the performers took it into his head to make an excuse, and his part was obliged to be read. Hobhouse came forward to apologize to the audience, and told them that a Mr — had declined to perform his part, &c. The gentleman was highly indignant at the 'a,' and had a great inclination to pick a quarrel with Scrope Davies, who replied, that he supposed Mr — wanted to be called *the* Mr so and so. He ever after went by the name of the 'Definite Article.'

The recital of this story put it into Byron's head to get up a play in his palace. Accordingly, Othello was selected, and Byron resolved to perform Iago, whilst Shelley, Medwin, &c. were to perform the other characters. Preparations were made, and some rehearsals took place ; but the Countess Guidioli, conscious that she would be wofully out of place in the character of Desdemona, or that, as a mere spectator, she would feel more than disagreeable in witnessing the affection and purity of the 'old man's daughter,' put a veto on the whole affair.

Whilst Byron was on that excellent Drury-Lane committee, which contrived so well to disgust the people, and destroy the profits of the house, he was a regular lounger behind the scenes. It seems ra-

ther remarkable, that, filling the situation which he did, and possessing such opportunities of becoming acquainted with theatricals, he has not left us any anecdotes connected with these establishments, save the two following—the first of which was some time since told by Colman, and the other is scarcely to be credited even from Byron.

“ I remember,” says he, “ one leg of an elephant saying to another, ‘ D——n your eyes, move a little quicker !’ And overhearing at the opera two people in love, who were so *distracts* that they made the responses between the intervals of the recitative, instead of during the recitative itself: One said to the other, ‘ Do you love me ?’ then came the flourish of music, and the reply sweeter than the music, ‘ Can you doubt it ?’ ”

Byron, according to Medwin, had a very high opinion of Monk Lewis. His portrait, however, of this author, is, perhaps, the only true one in the “ English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.” Byron praised highly, in Medwin’s presence, Lewis’s “ Monk.” “ The Monk,” says Byron, “ is perhaps one of the best romances in any language, not excepting the German. The ‘ Monk’ was written when Lewis was only twenty, and he seems to have exhausted all his genius upon it.” This is like many other of his Lordship’s opinions—his own alone—taken up and affirmed, because denied by every body else. The “ Monk” is one of the most silly and disgusting works in the English language—in loathsome licentiousness worthy of a place next to

the French “Faublas:” Neither is there great or powerful imagination displayed in it. The only excuse for the “Monk” is, that it was written while its author was in his twentieth year. Like all the works of precocious talent, it has proved an abortion. In the romance depending on the terrific improbable, Lewis must hide his diminished head when compared with Maturin. The latter had by much a finer and more original talent for these writings than Lewis. Maturin could pursue a story, plunging deeper and deeper into the terrific, sporting the new beings, and new and harrowing scenes of a most luxuriant imagination. Lewis saw only one terrific object, and one terrific scene; there he stopt to hold up his hands, and make his hair stand on end. He sought not to vary it, or conjoin it with other scenes equally terrible. Like the old grandame seated by the chimney fire, he required a separate tale to every new incident, and supernatural occurrence. Maturin wrote as a man of the world, making the best use of his imagination,—but Lewis believed every thing which he wrote. He was a walking Romance; and could deal out on all occasions the most fearful stories. It is said he delighted in the company of young persons. They, rather, must have been delighted in him—for there is not a doubt but Lewis would have received the best seat in any nursery, and been a demi-god in the eyes of the children and their maids. Lewis was the accoucheur to Scott’s early productions, like Dr Slop to Tristram Shandy, correcting mal-formed members; for Scott then knew little about the mechanism of verses. Two stories are

told by Byron—one of which Lewis was in the practice of constantly relating, and the other is that on which he founded his tale of Imogene.

"Whilst Lewis was residing at Manheim, every night at the same hour, he heard, or thought he heard, in his room, when he was lying in bed, a crackling noise like that produced by parchment, or thick paper. This circumstance caused enquiry, when it was told him that the sounds were attributable to the following cause:—The house in which he lived had belonged to a widow, who had an only son. In order to prevent his marrying a poor, but amiable girl, to whom he was attached, he was sent to sea. Years passed, and the mother heard no tidings of him, nor the ship in which he had sailed. It was supposed that the vessel had been wrecked, and that all on board had perished. The reproaches of the girl, the upbraiding of her own conscience, and the loss of her child, crazed the old lady's mind, and her only pursuit became to turn over the Gazettes for news. Hope at length left her: she did not live long,—and continued her old occupation after death."

The other story, the original of "Alonzo and Imogene," his Lordship thus relates:—"Two Florentine lovers, who had been attached to each other almost from childhood, made a vow of eternal fidelity. Mina was the name of the lady—her husband's I forget, but it is not material. They parted. He had been for some time absent with his regiment, when, as his disconsolate lady was sitting alone in her chamber, she distinctly heard the well-known sound of his footsteps, and starting up beheld, not

her husband, but his spectre, with a deep ghastly wound across his forehead, entering. She swooned with horror: when she recovered, the ghost told her that in future his visits should be announced by a passing-bell, and these words distinctly whispered, ‘ Mina, I am here !’ Their interviews now became frequent, till the woman fancied herself as much in love with the ghost as she had been with the man. But it was soon to prove otherwise. One fatal night she went to a ball:—What business had she there ? She danced, too ; and, what was worse, her partner was a young Florentine, so much the counterpart of her lover, that she became estranged from his ghost. Whilst the young gallant conducted her in the waltz, and her ear drank in the music of his voice and words, a passing-bell tolled ! She had been accustomed to the sound till it hardly excited her attention, and now lost in the attractions of her fascinating partner, she heard but regarded it not. A second peal !—she listened not to its warnings. A third time the bell, with its deep and iron tongue, startled the assembled company, and silenced the music ! Mina turned her eyes from her partner, and saw reflected in the mirror, a form, a shadow, a spectre : it was her husband ! He was standing between her and the young Florentine, and whispered in a solemn and melancholy tone, the accustomed accents, ‘ Mina, I am here !’ She instantly fell dead :”—the two ghosts walked out of the ball-room arm in arm.

Lewis accused himself of some injuries towards a brother who had died young ; and was firm in the belief that his ghost visited him when about to un-

dertake any thing of importance. He styled this ghost his monitor.

Byron has been often styled a plagiary. He has himself allowed, that, when he found a good idea in his head, he made use of it without scrupulously enquiring how it got there. The ideas in his poems we leave to be settled by those ingenious critics, who can

“ Hunt a thought through Greece and Rome,”

and who amuse themselves by filling their common-place books with parallel passages in the bards of ancient and modern times. This is the work of minute commentators, and Byron will in his turn suffer from these also. Those who view his poems in their design will find but little reason to call him a plagiary. Childe Harold, Conrad, Lara, The Bride of Abydos, Beppo, and Don Juan, were all exclusively belonging to his Lordship. He wrote tragedies because it was a field worthy of his Pegasus, and the guerdon richly repaying the candidate. When he became something acquainted with the writings of Goethe, and the German school, then came a parcel of Faust-ish pieces which will only shew his inferiority in one department to the great German. Cain was a daring attempt at two characters—to embody Spinoza and surpass Gesner. Mazeppa was a tilt against Cowper, and an attempt to destroy John Gilpin—but a failure—for the “ Train-band Captain” is still a greater favourite

than the “Ukraine’s Hetman.”* The “English Bards and Scotch Reviewers” was an avowed imitation of Pope and Gifford; and the fragment entitled the “Vampyre” was a transcript of the German school of romance. He even at one time intended to write a novel in conjunction with Mr Dallas—but that gentleman, clever as he was at writing stuff, shrank from the task. Dallas has given the two first chapters of this intended novel. There is little in them above what is to be found in most works of the same class.† Perhaps Byron was too much guided by what he saw excelling in others—something “too envious of another’s fame.” It was ambition that induced him to write the “Deformed Transformed,” and “Cain”;—and it was revenge for mortified ambition that led him to abuse the English dramatic taste, and the most adored poets of England. Byron did not possess that firm and undeviating mind which we often see in truly great men:—He was not guided by the steady light of his own intellect alone:—He was not stubborn to his own mind—the curious consequence of extremely powerful and extremely ignor-

* For this, see Blackwood’s Magazine.

† In the Westminster Review we observe a severe attack is made on the late Mr Dallas. The following lines, written by Lord Byron on one of those letters with which Dallas constantly bored him, express his Lordship’s opinion of his friend:—

“ Here lies R. C. Dallas,
Who wanted money, and had some malice;
If, instead of a cottage, he had lived in a palace,
We should have had none of these sallies.”

ant minds. He was wavering, not swayed in any thing by a consciousness of right, but by a regard for appearance ; and, as not guided by sincere principle, he was therefore apt, at times, to stray from one side to the other. It is this which has produced several anomalous traits in his character. Milton was the same from his youth to the day of his death,—a mighty mountain not to be moved. Byron was a loadstone, liable to be easily contaminated by foreign bodies. In his writings, as in his conduct and opinions, he could not persevere in the path he had struck out for himself. Rugged and wild as it was, he had the audacity to attempt that still more sublime one over which Goethe was striding like a giant ;—and he even essayed that directly opposite bye-way, by “ silvery stream and flowery dale,” along which the finely poetic Wordsworth was leisurely journeying. He supposed to have, himself like Briareus, fifty heads,—and wished, with his hundred hands, to sway the sceptre, and rule lord paramount over the whole regions of poetry.

In the politics of his country, Lord Byron, to all appearance, decidedly belonged to the liberal side. He did not belong to that body of English Peers which can support the principles of whiggism with the becoming propriety of rank ; but he descended to associate with that club which, hating royalty in the abstract, abuses its representative. The “ Irish Avatar,” which was circulated in London some years ago, is an excellent specimen of the

species of writing belonging to this body of liberals.

THE IRISH AVATARA.

“ Ere the daughter of Brunswick is cold in her grave,
 Whilst her ashes still float to their home o'er the tide,
 Lo ! George the triumphant speeds over the wave
 To the long-cherish'd Isle which he loved—like his Bride.

True, the great of her bright and brief era are gone,—
 The rainbow-like epoch when Freedom could pause,
 For the few little years out of centuries won,—
 That betray'd not, and crush'd not, and wept not her cause.

True, the chains of the Catholic clank o'er his rags,
 The Castle still stands, and the Senate's no more ;
 And the famine that dwells on her freedomless crags,
 Is extending its steps to her desolate shore :

To her desolate shore, where the emigrant stands
 For a moment to pause ere he flies from his hearth :
 Tears fall on his chain, though it drops from his hands,
 For the dungeon he quits is the place of his birth.

But he comes ! the Messiah of Royalty comes !
 Like a goodly Leviathan roll'd from the waves !
 Then receive him, as best such an advent becomes,
 With a legion of cooks, and an army of slaves.

He comes ! in the promise and bloom of three-score,
 To perform in the pageant the Sovereign's part !
 But long live the Shamrock that shadows him o'er,
 Could the green on his hat be transferr'd to his heart :

Could that long-wither'd spot be but verdant again,
 And a new spring of noble affections arise,
 Then might Freedom forgive thee this dance with thy chain,
 And the shout of thy Slavery, which saddens the skies.

Is it madness or meanness which clings to thee now ?
 Were he God—as he is but the commonest clay,
 With scarce fewer wrinkles than sins on his brow—
 Such servile devotion might shame him away !

But roar in his train ; let thine orators lash
 Their fanciful spirits to pamper his pride :
 Not thus did thy Grattan indignantly flash
 His soul on the freedom implored and denied !

Ever-glorious Grattan ! the best of the good !
 So simple in heart—so sublime in the rest,
 With all that Demosthenes wanted endued,
 And his victor, a rival, in all he possess'd ;

Ere Tully arose in the zenith of Rome
 By some, though unequal, the task was begun :
 But Grattan sprung up, like a god from the tomb
 Of ages,—the first, last, the Saviour—the One !

With the skill of an Orpheus to soften the brute—
 With the fire of Prometheus to kindle mankind ;
 Even Tyranny, listening, sat melted or mute,
 And Corruption sank scorch'd from the glance of his mind.

Ay ! back to our theme—back to despots and slaves,
 Feasts furnished by Famine—rejoicings by Pain ;
 True Freedom but *welcomes*, while Slavery still *raves*,
 When a week's saturnalia have loosen'd her chain.

Let the poor squalid splendour thy wreck can afford,
 (As the bankrupt's profusion his ruin would hide,)
 Gild over the palace,—lo ! Erin thy lord,—
 Kiss his foot, with thy blessing, for blessings denied !

And if freedom past hope be extorted at last,—
 If the idol of brass find his feet are of clay,—
 Must what terror or policy wrung forth be class'd
 With what monarchs ne'er give, but as wolves yield their prey ?

Each brute hath its nature,—a king's is to reign :—

To reign !—in that word see, ye ages, comprised,
The cause of the curses all annals contain,

From Cæsar the dreaded to ——— the despised !

Wear, Fingal, thy trappings ! O'Connell, proclaim
His accomplishments—*his !!*—and thy country convince,
Half an age's contempt was an error of Fame,
And that “ Hal is the * * * * sweetest young Prince !”

Will thy yard of blue ribbon, poor Fingal ! recall
The fetters from millions of Catholic limbs ?
Or has it not bound thee the fastest of all
The slaves who now hail their betrayer with hymns ?

Ay, “ build him a dwelling !” let each give his mite,
Till, like Babel, this new royal dome has arisen :
Let thy beggars and Helots their pittance unite,
And a palace bestow for a poor-house and prison !

Spread, spread for Vitellius the royal repast,
Till the gluttonous * * * * be stuff'd to the gorge,
And the roar of his drunkards proclaim him at last
The * * * of the fools and * * * * call'd ——— !

Let the tables be loaded with feasts till they groan,—
Till they groan like thy people through ages of woe—
Let the wine flow around the old Bacchanal's throne,
Like the blood * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

But let not *his* name be thine idol alone !
On his right hand behold a *Sejunus* appears—
Thine own Castlereagh ! Let him still be thine own !
A wretch never named but with curses and tears.

Till now, when this Isle, that should blush for his birth,
Deep, deep as the gore which he shed on her soil,
Seems proud of the reptile that crawl'd from her earth,
And for * * * * repays him with shouts and a smile !

Without one single ray of her genius,—without
 The fancy, the manhood, the fire of her race,—
 The miscreant who well might plunge Erin in doubt
 If she ever gave birth to a being so base !

If she did, may her long-boasted proverb be hush'd,
 Which proclaims that no reptile from Erin can spring !
 See the cold-blooded serpent, with venom full flush'd,
 Still warming its folds in the heart of a king !

Shout, drink, feast, and flatter ! Oh, Erin ! how low
 Wert thou sunk by misfortune and tyranny, till
 Thy welcome of tyrants have plunged thee below
 The depth of thy deep in a deeper gulf still !

My voice, though but humble, was raised in thy right ;
 My vote,* as a freeman's, still voted the free ;
 My arm, though but feeble, would arm in thy fight ;
 And this heart, though outworn, had a throb still for thee !

Yes ! I loved thee and thine, though thou wert not *my* land ;
 I have known noble hearts and brave souls in thy sons,
 And I wept with the world on the patriot band
 Who are gone,—but I weep them no longer as once !

For happy are they now reposing afar—
 Thy Curran, thy Grattan, thy Sheridan—all,
 Who for years were the chiefs in the eloquent war,
 And redeem'd, if they have not retarded thy fall !

Yes, happy are they in their cold English graves !
 Their shades cannot start at thy shouts of to-day ;
 Nor the steps of enslavers and chain-kissing slaves
 Be stamp'd in the turf o'er their fetterless clay !

Till now I had envied thy sons and thy shore !
 Though their virtues are blunted, their liberties fled,
 There is something so warm and sublime in the core
 Of an Irishman's heart, that I envy—their dead !

* He spoke on the Catholic question.

Or if aught in my bosom can quench for an hour
My contempt for a nation so servile, though sore,
Which, though trod like the worm, will not turn upon power,
'Tis the glory of Grattan—the genius of Moore !

In the “English Bards and Scotch Reviewers” Byron sufficiently abused Lord Holland. When Byron became popular, that nobleman was anxious to be introduced to him. The introduction was made through Rogers, and took place at Byron’s lodgings in St. James’s Street. “I happened,” says Mr. Dallas, “to be there at the time, and thought it a curious event: Lord Byron evidently had an awkward feeling on the occasion, from a conscious recollection, which did not seem to be participated by his visitors. Lord Holland’s age, experience, and other acquired distinctions, certainly, in point of form, demanded that the visit should be paid at his house. This I am confident Lord Byron at that time would not have done; though he was greatly pleased that the introduction took place, and afterwards waved all ceremony.”

Byron, on reading the excellent Memoirs of Coleridge, was struck with the idea of writing memoirs of himself for the information and amusement of posterity. To it, accordingly, he went, and soon finished a book wherein he freely exposed all his sores to the eyes of the world, and treated both of himself, and of all those in any way connected with him, with the levity and fearlessness of the author of *Don Juan*. “I am sorry,” said he to Medwin,

"not to have a copy of my Memoirs to shew you ; I gave them to Moore, or rather to Moore's little boy, at Venice. I remember saying, 'Here are two thousand pounds for you, my young friend.' I made one reservation in the gift,—that they were not to be published till after my death.

"I have not the least objection to their being circulated ; in fact they have been read by some of mine, and several of Moore's friends and acquaintances ; among others, they were lent to Lady Burghersh. On returning the MS. her Ladyship told Moore that she had transcribed the whole work. This was *un peu fort*, and he suggested the propriety of her destroying the copy. She did so by putting it into the fire in his presence. Ever since this happened, Douglas Kinnaird has been recommending me to resume possession of the MS., thinking to frighten me by saying that a spurious or a real copy, surreptitiously obtained, may go forth to the world. I am quite indifferent about the world knowing all that they contain. There are very few licentious adventures of my own, or scandalous anecdotes that will affect others, in the book. It is taken up from my earliest recollections, almost from childhood,—very incoherent, written in a very loose and familiar style. The second part will prove a good lesson to young men ; for it treats of the irregular life I led at one period, and the fatal consequences of dissipation. There are few parts that may not, and none that will not be read by women." At another time he said to Medwin: "A very full account of my marriage and separation is contained in my Memoirs. After they were completed, I wrote to Lady Byron,

proposing to send them for her inspection, in order that any misstatement or inaccuracy (if any such existed, which I was not aware of,) might be pointed out and corrected. In her answer she declined the offer, without assigning any reason; but desiring, if not on her account for the sake of her daughter, that they might never appear, and finishing with a threat. My reply was the severest thing I ever wrote, and contained two quotations, one from Shakespeare, and another from Dante. I told her that she knew all I had written was incontrovertible truth, and that she did not wish to sanction the truth. I ended by saying, that she might depend on their being published. It was not till after this correspondence that I made Moore the depositary of the MS."

It is known to all our readers, that these Memoirs were sold to Mr Murray, and on Byron's death burned in the presence of Mr Moore, and with his consent, he returning the sum paid for the copy-right. The perpetrators of this act committed a robbery on the public, and Mr Moore committed a breach of trust—provided that is not true what we have heard stated, viz. that Byron, some time before his going to Greece for the second time, had expressed a wish that they might not be published. If Mr Moore will publicly acknowledge this, or if Mr Hobhouse, or any of Byron's intimate friends, will declare such to have been the wish of Lord Byron, then the public will rest satisfied, and add the whole passage about the Memoirs in the "Conversations" to the many other unauthenticated rumours, clad with colloquial phrase in that volume.

The Memoirs were well known to Byron's relations and intimate friends, and it was their earnest desire that they might be destroyed. The public may complain against Mr Moore, but yet, soberly considering the matter, they must allow that he acted, and sacrificed much, from the purest motives. The Memoirs must have been unfit for publication, otherwise they would not have been so speedily and so unanimously condemned to the flames by Messrs Hobhouse, Hanson, Murray, and Moore. It is more than likely these Memoirs were the effects of a sudden whim of Lord Byron's. They were written to cause a little devilry, or, like the Confessions of Rousseau, to insult those who had been his admirers and advocates—to make a fool of those who had supported his character and name. They were written while he was just emerging from a sea of dissipation and licentiousness; and must have contained more of the feelings and the disgusts of the satiated debauchee than of the man. They were not the calm production of one desirous to preserve uninjured his reputation amongst posterity; nor were they the confessions of a repentant sinner. It is more than probable that Byron himself, before his death, wished them destroyed. Curiosity, and the love of scandal, may be disappointed by the fate of the Memoirs, but they who have seen them have treasured up in memory all that was important in them; and if some one do not now dissipate false rumours, or stamp a certainty on those that are true, then it must be supposed that, in burning his Memoirs, they have committed a murder on his memory. Their conduct is highly improper. If

he was in the wrong, let it be shown—if others are in the fault, why should *his* memory suffer to save their feelings?

“ Whate’er might be *his* worthlessness or worth,
Poor fellow ! he had many things to wound him.
It was a trying moment that which found him,
Standing alone, beside his desolate hearth,
While all his household gods were shiver’d round him.”

The greatest breach of confidence that can be conceived, is to suffer the memory of a departed friend to stalk through the world unprotected—the football of the crowd.

There ought properly to be no jealousy amongst literary men ; or at any rate, if this jealousy is to be permitted as an evil over-balanced by an immense good—emulation to obtain by their works the approbation of the people—there ought to be no animosity from party politics. The war betwixt Byron and Scott will be ever pointed out as an honour to both. It is pleasing to find one mighty mind doing justice to another, and to see genius dignifying human nature by pronouncing the eulogy over a departed kindred spirit. The following is worthy of Sir Walter Scott :—

“ Amidst the general calmness of the political atmosphere, we have been stunned, from another quarter, by one of those death-notes which are pealed at intervals, as from an archangel’s trumpet, to awaken the soul of a whole people at once. Lord Byron, who has so long and so amply filled the highest place in the public eye, has shared the lot

of humanity. His Lordship died at Missolonghi on the 19th of April. That mighty genius, which walked amongst men as something superior to ordinary mortality, and whose powers were beheld with wonder, and something approaching to terror, as if we knew not whether they were of good or of evil, is laid as soundly to rest as the poor peasant whose ideas never went beyond his daily task. The voice of just blame and of malignant censure are at once silenced ; and we feel almost as if the great luminary of Heaven had suddenly disappeared from the sky, at the moment when every telescope was levelled for the examination of the spots which dimmed its brightness. It is not now the question, what were Byron's faults, what his mistakes ; but how is the blank which he has left in British literature to be filled up ? Not, we fear, in one generation, which, among many highly gifted persons, has produced none who approach Byron in **ORIGINALITY**, the first attribute of genius. Only thirty-seven years old—so much already done for immortality—so much time remaining, as it seems to us short-sighted mortals, to maintain and to extend his fame, and to atone for errors in conduct, and levities in composition—who will not grieve that such a race has been shortened, though not always keeping the straight path ; such a light extinguished, though sometimes flaming to dazzle and to bewilder ? One word on this ungrateful subject ere we quit it for ever.

“ The errors of Lord Byron arose neither from depravity of heart,—for nature had not committed the anomaly of uniting to such extraordinary talents

an imperfect moral sense,—nor from feelings dead to the admiration of virtue. No man had ever a kinder heart for sympathy, or a more open hand for the relief of distress ; and no mind was ever more formed for the enthusiastic admiration of noble actions, providing he was convinced that the actors had proceeded on disinterested principles. Lord Byron was totally free from the curse and degradation of literature,—its jealousies we mean, and its envy ; but his wonderful genius was of a nature which disdained restraint, even when restraint was most wholesome. When at school, the tasks in which he excelled were those only which he undertook voluntarily ; and his situation as a young man of rank, with strong passions, and in the uncontrolled enjoyment of a considerable fortune, added to that impatience of strictures or coercion which was natural to him. As an author, he refused to plead at the bar of criticism ; as a man, he would not submit to be morally amenable to the tribunal of public opinion. Remonstrances from a friend, of whose intentions and kindness he was secure, had often great weight with him ; but there were few who could venture on a task so difficult. Reproof he endured with impatience, and reproach hardened him in his error ; so that he often resembled the gallant war-steed, who rushes forward on the steel that wounds him. In the most painful crisis of his private life, he evinced this irritability and impatience of censure in such a degree, as almost to resemble the noble victim of the bull-fight, which is more maddened by the squibs, darts, and petty annoyances of the unworthy crowds beyond the lists,

than by the lance of his nobler, and, so to speak, legitimate antagonist. In a word, much of that in which he erred was in bravado and scorn of his censors, and was done with the motive of Dryden's despot, to "show his arbitrary power." It is needless to say that his was a false and prejudiced view of such a contest; and if the noble bard gained a sort of triumph, by compelling the world to read poetry, though mixed with baser matter, because it was *his*, he gave, in return, an unworthy triumph to the unworthy, besides deep sorrow to those whose applause, in his cooler moments, he most valued.

" It was the same with his politics, which on several occasions assumed a tone menacing and contemptuous to the constitution of his country; while, in fact, Lord Byron was in his own heart sufficiently sensible, not only of his privilege as a Briton, but of the distinction attending his high birth and rank, and was peculiarly of those shades which constitute what is termed the manners of a gentleman: Indeed, notwithstanding his having employed epigrams, and all the petty war of wit, when such would have been much better abstained from, he would have been found, had a collision taken place between the aristocratic parties in the state, exerting all his energies in defence of that to which he naturally belonged. His own feeling on these subjects he has explained in the very last canto of *Don Juan*; and they are in entire harmony with the opinions which we have seen expressed in his correspondence, at a moment when matters appeared to approach a serious struggle in his native country.

“ He was an independent—ay, much more
Than those who were not paid for independence ;
As common soldiers, or a common—Shore,
Have in their several acts or parts ascendance
O'er the irregulars in lust or gore,
Who do not give professional attendance.
Thus on the mob all statesmen are as eager
To prove their pride, as footmen to a beggar.’

“ We are not, however, Byron’s apologists ; for *now*, alas ! he needs none. His excellencies will *now* be universally acknowledged, and his faults (let us hope and believe) not remembered in his epitaph. It will be recollected what a part he has sustained in British literature since the first appearance of ‘Childe Harold,’ a space of nearly sixteen years. There has been no reposing under the shade of his laurels, no living upon the resource of past reputation ; none of that *coddling* and petty precaution which little authors call “ taking care of their fame.” Byron let his fame take care of itself. His foot was always in the arena, his shield hung always in the lists ; and although his own gigantic renown increased the difficulty of the struggle, since he could produce nothing, however great, which exceeded the public estimates of his genius, yet he advanced to the contest again, and came always off with distinction, almost always with complete triumph. As various in composition as Shakespeare himself, (this will be admitted by all who are acquainted with his “Don Juan,”) he has embraced every topic of human life, and sounded every string on the divine harp, from its slightest to its most powerful and heart-astounding tones. There is scarce a passion or a situation

which has escaped his pen ; and he might be drawn, like Garrick, between the weeping and the laughing muse, although his most powerful efforts have certainly been dedicated to Melpomene. His genius seemed as prolific as various. The most prodigal use did not exhaust his powers, nay, seemed rather to increase their vigour. Neither ‘ Childe Harold,’ nor any of the most beautiful of Byron’s earlier tales, contain more exquisite morsels of poetry than are to be found scattered through the cantos of “ Don Juan,” amidst verses which the author appears to have thrown off with an effort as spontaneous as that of a tree resigning its leaves to the wind. But that noble tree will never more bear fruit or blossom ! It has been cut down in its strength, and the past is all that remains to us of Byron. We can scarce reconcile ourselves to the idea—scarce think that the voice is silent for ever, which, bursting so often on our ear, was often heard with rapturous admiration, sometimes with regret, but always with the deepest interest :—

“ All that’s bright must fade ;
The brightest still the fleetest.”

“ With a strong feeling of awful sorrow, we take leave of the subject. Death creeps upon our serious as well as upon our most idle employments ; and it is a reflection solemn and gratifying, that he found our Byron in no moment of levity, but contributing his fortune and hazarding his life, in behalf of a people only endeared to him by their past glories, and as fellow-creatures suffering under the

yoke of a heathen oppressor. To have fallen in a crusade for freedom and humanity, as in olden times it would have been an atonement for the blackest crimes, may in the present be allowed to expiate greater follies, than even exaggerated calumny has propagated against Byron."

The opinions of the Poet-Laureate of England are, as we have mentioned, the very reverse of Sir Walter Scott's in regard to Byron.

We observe a work advertised as about to be published, "Byron's Second Journey to Greece, by Peter Count Gamba." This personage, we suppose, is the brother of the Guiccioli, and the same who accompanied Byron to Greece, and who, when taken prisoner, gulled the Pacha by assuming the language and title of an English nobleman. We have no objection to Peter's publishing;—all we hope is, that he will be impartial. The Gambas are, as we have already stated, Italians,—belonging to that class of Italian nobility termed Carbonari,—*i. e.* persons who mutter in their sleep about liberty, but are always perfectly awake and decorous in the presence of their masters—the whiskered Austrian soldiery. Miladi Morgan, when riding post through Italy, was always discovering a concealed patriotism in one nobleman, a concealed but firm and undaunted love of liberty in a certain other nobleman, a concealed but desponding feeling for the degradation of his country in a third, and an invincible, but still concealed, detestation of their oppressors in nearly all the nobility. It would have

spoke more for Italy, however, if Lady Morgan, instead of exhibiting such fearless divining of men's thoughts, could have produced six instances of devotion, "even unto death," at the shrine of patriotism or liberty amongst all Italy's grand nobility during the last eventful fifty years. The Gambas family is one of those numerous and respectable families of Italy who endure the slur of suspicion without the merit of ever having committed an act worthy of it. The connexion existing between the Gambas and Byron was perhaps sufficient to create suspicions in a government that is too conscious of its own imbecility to punish only the openly refractory—and, therefore, not being able to subsist by manly cruelty and physical force, supports a tyranny the most detestable by craft and insidiousness—ramifying itself into the heart of every family; and, ruffian-like, strangling the infant Liberty in the very cradle. But to return to the Book of Peter,—we must express a sincere hope that it will contain a luminous view of Byron's conduct in Greece, his intentions in going there, and some striking traits in his character. There is a book entitled, "Hints to Mothers on the Management of Children:"—Count Peter's sister, who, Captain Medwin asserts, was the only sensible woman that could manage Lord Byron, might confer a benefit on posterity by publishing "Hints to Wives on the Management of Husbands."

It may not be amiss to say a few words on the two works which have appeared connected with his

Lordship. The "Conversations" were advertised and puffed into notoriety by more ways than Mr Puff in the "Critic" ever thought of. They have been crammed down our throats *ad nauseam*. The book is a good looking book, and has the most complete table of contents of any book in the language—it—the table—being extended to 23 pages of small and close print—and they—the contents—being extended to 351 ; but nevertheless capable, with a moderate type, of having been compressed into twice the space taken up by the table of contents.* Often the articles in the table of contents are more full than in the body of the work. It purports on the title-page to be by "Thomas Medwin, Esq. Captain in the 25th Light Dragoons." Now, we don't object to Esq. on the title-page of a book, though, like Cobbett, we have no great idea of these authors and *soi-disant* esquires. To be sure, in ancient days, Locke wrote on his title-page, "John Locke, Gent.," but then his book bespoke a gentleman. Oliver Goldsmith, Esq., or Samuel Johnson, Esq. LL.D. would to us look rather queerish ; however, it is getting into fashion, and we don't object to a title more easily obtained than a degree from an Aberdeen university. Nor have we any antipathy to the mentioning a situation as a pledge for respectability. We remember (and who does not ?) the twice told tale of the publican who wrote on his sign-post "Porter, Beer, and

* We allude to the octavo copy. We are too well acquainted with the tricks of the trade to buy a popular work in quarto.

British Spirits by Duncan M'Donald, M.D.F.R.S." It seems to be a practice, so let it pass. When a London Alderman first publishes a book, it is to be hoped he will take the hint from the army folks, and state the fact below his name.

The opportunities enjoyed by Captain Medwin of picking up the conversations of Byron were great. He was the cousin of Shelley, and Shelley lived with Lord Byron. He was introduced by his cousin, and, if we take Captain M.'s word for it, he was soon on very familiar terms with his Lordship. We ought not to question any thing contained in the "Conversations," when we find it stated in them, that he (Captain Medwin) knew more of Lord Byron than is stated in the *Book*,—meaning the Memoirs. One short anecdote we give to shew on what familiar footing he was with Lord Byron.

Captain M. had removed a book, in spite of Mr Fletcher's remonstrances, from Byron's study, which was against his express orders for any one to do. On Fletcher's acquainting his Lordship, and requesting to be informed of the line of conduct he was to pursue if the like should occur again, his Lordship's reply was most characteristic—more so than any thing occurring in the "Conversations." " Kick his a——!"—a real Byronism,—a genuine example of the offended aristocrat and poet. After this we may be convinced of the degree of credit to be given to the "Conversations." It does not appear that Byron ever imagined he had a spy under his roof. Had he been aware of having such a one watching him, it is more than likely he would have horsewhipped him out. As it is, howa



ever, Captain Medwin has not exhibited any new traits in Byron's character; nor will the ghost of the Peer visit him for displaying secrets not known to all the world before. Byron, among his other presentiments, had a presentiment of such a book as Medwin's when he wrote the following stanza:

" And if our quarrels should rip up old stories,
And help them with a lie or two additional,
I'm not to blame, as you well know, no more is
Any one else—*they were become traditional*;
Besides, their resurrection aids our glories
By contrast, which is what we just were wishing all—
And science profits by this resurrection—
Dead scandals form good subjects for dissection."

The "Conversations" have been compared to the "Life of Johnson," and Medwin to Boswell. Now this is absolute nonsense—none but a sheer ignoramus could compare the dragoon Captain to the "industrious Scotchman,"—for the former was in Byron's company only four months at farthest,*

* The title-page of the Conversations says they were "noted during a residence at Pisa in the years 1821 and 1822." Inexperienced persons would suppose this included the space of two twelvemonths; but we can assure them that the real space of time during which the conversations were held, was, at the utmost, four months, (Captain Medwin, by his own account, having been introduced to Byron in the latter part of Autumn, and leaving Pisa in the March following.) This trick of stealing upon laggard time is pretty familiar to booksellers and professed authors. We have heard of a traveller that left the Saracen's Head in the Dover coach after his Christmas dinner, crossed over to France, and, on his return to his twelfth-day cake, by the same conveyance, published a "Tour to the Continent in the years 18— and 18—," in one handsome octavo volume—at least if this is not *exactly* the case, it is within an ace of being so.

whilst the Scotchman was to the great lexicographer a constant pest—a necessary evil—“the canister tied to the dog’s tail,” as Johnson said metaphorically pointing out their connexion and close intimacy. Nor do we think any person in his sober sense would compare the minute, circumstantial, operose work of the one, to the vagueness, hap-hazard, incorrect twaddle of the other. Our modest unpretending volume is worth two of Medwin’s.

Mr Dallas’ “Recollections” forms likewise a book which displays more of Byron’s character than the “Conversations.” The reader will not always come to the same conclusions as Mr Dallas, because he cannot fail to observe that, in his connection with Mr Dallas, Byron wore the mask, and, it may be presumed, a very troublesome one. Politeness prevented him from being angry with the over-officiousness of a friend—(who, by the way, took no notice of him until he perceived his rising eminence)—but no sooner was he out of England than “Richard was himself again,” and he immediately forgot Mr Dallas. This gentleman, indeed, was not made for companionship with Lord Byron. He was a worthy, well-designing, and kindly officious man; ready, withal, to pocket, in a friendly way, the produce of Byron’s works with perfect non-chalance, but sincerely zealous for preserving the reputation of his Lordship, and forwarding his immortal interests here and hereafter: but this very eagerness must have rendered him a bore to Byron. His book, however, conveys a great deal of information regarding Byron’s early literary career, and

will be the ground-work for some biographer fifty years hence—for before that time a good one cannot appear. A Hobhouse or a Moore may write a life of him, but it cannot be correct, as it must consist, in a great measure, of party spirit and partiality. It is to be sincerely desired, however, at present, that one of those gentlemen who were his friends would step forward, and in a work, which the world would give credit to, anatomise that mighty mind which shone for so short a time, but yet so brilliantly, in the zenith of literature. It must not for a moment be supposed, that the work of a Medwin is to be the medium through which we are to view the character and opinions of the greatest poet of his own, or perhaps any other age. There is not a single anecdote, criticism, or opinion given in the “Conversations” which has not been known, if not to the public, at least to his friends. These friends are able to correct errors, misrepresentations, calumnies, and falsehoods. Let some one of them then come forward.

Mr Fletcher was Byron's valet from the time of his Lordship's leaving the university until the time of his death. He was a shoemaker near Newstead Abbey, and Byron took a fancy to him, seeing him an unprotected isolated being something like himself. Fletcher was a faithful servant, and a perfect imitator of all his master's foibles. In his love epistles he copied from those sent to his master by fair correspondents; and, when wishing to be particularly fine, styled himself “a blasted laurel

struck by a *metre*." He was a true Leporello. To his master he was an almost constant butt for jokes. Fletcher had a greater relish for the comforts of an English yeoman than for all the niceties to be found abroad. He sighed often for the beer and beef of old England, and the smiles of his wife Sally. Courage was no ingredient of his character, and his fears were often troublesome to his master. Byron was in general kind to his servants, and was never willing to part with them. In his letters to his mother he is particular in always enquiring after those domestics he had left at Newstead. Not only had he an attachment to all the unfeathered bipeds who were domesticated with him, but likewise to the bull-dogs, monkeys, fowls, &c. Captain Medwin thus describes the travelling equipage of his Lordship :—" Seven servants, five carriages, nine horses, a monkey, a bull-dog, and a mastiff; two cats, three pea-fowls, and some hens, (I do not know whether I have classed them in order of rank,) formed part of his live stock ; and all his books, consisting of a very large library of modern works, (for he bought all the best that came out,) together with a vast quantity of furniture, might well be termed with Cæsar, " impediments."

At the time Byron published his *Childe Harold*, his appearance was thus described :—" A countenance exquisitely modelled to the expression of feeling and passion, and exhibiting the remarkable contrast of very dark hair and eye-brows, with light and expressive eyes, presented to the physiognomist

the most interesting subject for the exercise of his art. The predominating expression was that of deep and habitual thought, which gave way to the most rapid play of features when he engaged in interesting discussion ; so that a brother poet compared them to the sculpture of a beautiful alabaster vase, only seen to perfection when lighted up from within. The flashes of mirth, gaiety, indignation, or satirical dislike, which frequently animated Lord Byron's countenance, might, during an evening's conversation, be mistaken by a stranger for the habitual expression, so easily and so happily was it formed for them all : but those who had an opportunity of studying his features for a length of time, and upon various occasions, both of rest and motion, will agree with us that their proper language was that of melancholy. It was impossible to behold this interesting countenance, expressive of a dejection belonging neither to the rank, the age, nor the success of this young nobleman, without feeling an indefinable curiosity to ascertain whether it had a deeper cause than habit or constitutional temperament." Medwin again has given the following description :—" I saw a man about five feet seven or eight, apparently forty years of age : as was said of Milton, he barely escaped being short and thick. His face was fine, and the lower part symmetrically moulded ; for the lips and chin had that curved and definite outline which distinguishes Grecian beauty. His forehead was high, and his temples broad ; and he had a paleness in his complexion almost to wan ness. His hair thin and fine, had almost become grey, and waved in natural and graceful curls over his head,

that was assimilating itself fast to the “bald first Cæsars.” He allowed it to grow longer behind than it is accustomed to be worn, and at that time had mustachios, which were not sufficiently dark to be becoming. In criticising his features it might, perhaps, be said, that his eyes were placed too near his nose, and that one was rather smaller than the other; they were of a greyish brown, but of a peculiar clearness, and when animated, possessed a fire which seemed to look through, and penetrate the thoughts of others, while they marked the inspirations of his own. His teeth were small, regular, and white: these, I afterwards found, he took great pains to preserve: for this purpose he used tobacco when he first went into the open air.”

THE
LAST MOMENTS
OF
LORD BYRON.

“MY master,” says Mr Fletcher, “continued his usual custom of riding daily when the weather would permit, until the 9th of April. But on that ill-fated day he got very wet; and on his return home his Lordship changed the whole of his dress; but he had been too long in his wet clothes, and the cold, of which he had complained more or less ever since we left Cephalonia, made this attack be more severely felt. Though rather feverish during the night, his Lordship slept pretty well, but complained in the morning of a pain in his bones, and a headache: this did not, however, prevent him from taking a ride in the afternoon, which, I grieve to say, was his last. On his return, my master said that the saddle was not perfectly dry, from being so wet the day before, and

observed that he thought it had made him worse. His Lordship was again visited by the same slow fever, and I was sorry to perceive, on the next morning, that his illness appeared to be increasing. He was very low, and complained of not having had any sleep during the night. His Lordship's appetite was also quite gone. I prepared a little arrow-root, of which he took three or four spoonfuls, saying it was very good, but could take no more. It was not till the third day, the 12th, that I began to be alarmed for my master. In all his former colds he always slept well, and was never affected by this slow fever. I therefore went to Dr Bruno, and Mr Millingen, the two medical attendants, and enquired minutely into every circumstance connected with my master's present illness: both replied that there was no danger, and I might make myself perfectly easy on the subject, for all would be well in a few days. This was on the 13th. On the following day, I found my master in such a state, that I could not feel happy without supplicating that he would send to Zante for Dr Thomas. After expressing my fears lest his Lordship should get worse, he desired me to consult the doctors, which I did, and was told there was no occasion for calling in any person, as they hoped all would be well in a few days. Here I should remark, that his Lordship repeatedly said, in the course of the day, he was sure the doctors did not understand his disease; to which I answered, 'Then, my Lord, have other advice by all means.' "They tell me," said his Lordship, "that it is only a common cold, which, you know, I have had a thousand

times." "I am sure, my Lord," said I, "that you never had one of so serious a nature."—"I think I never had," was his Lordship's answer. I repeated my supplications that Dr Thomas should be sent for, on the 15th, and was again assured that my master would be better in two or three days. After these confident assurances, I did not renew my entreaties until it was too late. With respect to the medicines that were given to my master, I could not persuade myself that those of a strong purgative nature were the best adapted for his complaint, concluding that, as he had nothing on his stomach, the only effect would be to create pain: indeed, this must have been the case with a person in perfect health. The whole nourishment taken by my master, for the last eight days, consisted of a small quantity of broth, at two or three different times, and two spoonfuls of arrow-root on the 18th, the day before his death. The first time I heard of there being any intention of bleeding his Lordship was on the 15th, when it was proposed by Dr Bruno, but objected to at first by my master, who asked Mr Millengen if there was any great reason for taking blood? The latter replied that it might be of service, but added it might be deferred till the next day; and accordingly, my master was bled in the right arm, on the evening of the 16th, and a pound of blood was taken. I observed at the time, that it had a most inflamed appearance. Dr Bruno now began to say, that he had frequently urged my master to be bled, but that he always refused: A long dispute now arose about the time that had been lost, and the necessity of sending for

medical aid to Zante ; upon which I was informed, for the first time, that it would be of no use, as my master would be better, or no more, before the arrival of Dr Thomas. His Lordship continued to get worse ; but Dr Bruno said, he thought letting blood again would save his life ; and lost no time in telling my master how necessary it was to comply with the Doctor's wishes. To this he replied by saying, he feared they knew nothing about his disorder ; and then, stretching out his arm, said, "Here, take my arm, and do whatever you like." His Lordship continued to get weaker ; and on the 17th, he was bled twice in the morning, and at two o'clock in the afternoon. The bleeding at both times was followed by fainting fits, and he would have fallen down more than once, had I not caught him in my arms. In order to prevent such an accident, I took care not to permit his Lordship to stir without supporting him. On this day my master said to me twice, "I cannot sleep, and you well know I have not been able to sleep for more than a week : I know," added his Lordship, "that a man can only be a certain time without sleep, and then he must go mad, without any one being able to save him ; and I would ten times sooner shoot myself than be mad, for I am not afraid of dying,—I am more fit to die than people think."

I do not, however, believe that his Lordship had any apprehension of his fate till the day after the 18th, when he said, "I fear you and Tita will be ill by sitting continually night and day." I answered, "We shall never leave your Lordship till you are better." As my master had a slight fit of de-

lirium on the 16th, I took care to remove the pistol and stiletto, which had hitherto been kept at his bedside in the night. On the 18th his Lordship addressed me frequently, and seemed to be very much dissatisfied with his medical treatment. I then said, "Do allow me to send for Dr. Thomas?" to which he answered, "Do so, but be quick. I am sorry I did not let you do so before, as I am sure they have mistaken my disease. Write yourself, for I know they would not like to see other doctors here." I did not lose a moment in obeying my master's orders; and on informing Dr. Bruno and Mr. Millengen of it, they said it was very right, as they now began to be afraid themselves. On returning to my master's room, his first words were, "Have you sent?"—"I have, my Lord," was my answer: upon which he said, "You have done right, for I should like to know what is the matter with me." Although his Lordship did not appear to think his dissolution was so near, I could perceive he was getting weaker every hour, and he even began to have occasional fits of delirium. He afterwards said "I now begin to think I am seriously ill, and in case I should be taken off suddenly, I wish to give you several directions, which I hope you will be particular in seeing executed." I answered I would, in case such an event came to pass; but expressed a hope that he would live many years to execute them much better himself than I could. To this my master replied, "No, it is now nearly over;" and then added, "I must tell you all without losing a moment!" I then said, "Shall I go, my Lord, and fetch pen, ink, and paper?"—"Oh, my God! no;

you will lose too much time, and I have it not to spare, for my time is now short," said his Lordship ; and immediately after, " Now pay attention !" His Lordship commenced by saying, " You will be provided for." I begged him, however, to proceed with things of more consequence. He then continued, " Oh, my poor dear child ! my dear Ada ! My God ! could I but have seen her ! Give her my blessing—and my dear sister Augusta and her children ; and you will go to Lady Byron, and say—tell her every thing ;—you are friends with her." His Lordship seemed to be greatly affected at this moment. Here my master's voice failed him, so that I could only catch a word at intervals ; but he kept muttering something very seriously for some time, and would often raise his voice and say, " Fletcher, now if you do not execute every order which I have given you, I will torment you hereafter if possible." Here I told his Lordship, in a state of the greatest perplexity, that I had not understood a word of what he said ; to which he replied, " Oh, my God ! then all is lost, for it is now too late ! Can it be possible you have not understood me ?"—" No, my Lord," said I ; " but I pray you to try and inform me once more." " How can I ?" rejoined my master ; " it is now too late, and all is over !" I said, " Not our will, but God's be done!"—and he answered, " Yes, not mine be done—but I will try"— His Lordship did indeed make several efforts to speak, but could only speak two or three words at a time—, such as, " My wife ! my child ! my sister !— you know all—you must say all—you know

my wishes :" the rest was quite unintelligible. A consultation was now held (about noon), when it was determined to administer some Peruvian bark and wine. My master had now been nine days without any sustenance whatever, except what I have already mentioned. With the exception of a few words, which can only interest those to whom they were addressed, and which, if required, I shall communicate to themselves, it was impossible to understand any thing his Lordship said after taking the bark. He expressed a wish to sleep. I at one time asked whether I should call Mr. Parry ; to which he replied, "Yes, you may call him." Mr. Parry desired him to compose himself. He shed tears, and apparently sunk into a slumber. Mr. Parry went away, expecting to find him refreshed on his return,—but it was the commencement of the lethargy preceding his death. The last words I heard my master utter were at six o'clock on the evening of the 18th, when he said, "I must sleep now;" upon which he laid down never to rise again !—for he did not move hand or foot during the following twenty-four hours. His Lordship appeared, however, to be in a state of suffocation at intervals, and had a frequent rattling in the throat : on these occasions I called Tita to assist me in raising his head, and I thought he seemed to get quite stiff. The rattling and choaking in the throat took place every half-hour ; and we continued to raise his head whenever the fit came on, till six o'clock in the evening of the 19th, when I saw my master open his eyes and then shut them, but without shewing any symptom of pain, or

moving hand or foot. "Oh ! my God !" I exclaimed, "I fear his Lordship is gone !" The Doctors then felt his pulse, and said, " You are right——he is gone !"

THE END.









